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INTERETHNIC RELATIONS IN RWANDA, THE ARMED CONFLICT  
OF OCTOBER 1990, MULTIPARTY POLITICS AND THE  
IMPLICATIONS ON THE 1994 EVENTS

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## 0. INTRODUCTION

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The tragedy which the Rwandan people are experiencing, particularly since 1<sup>st</sup> October 1990, originates from a problem which nobody has yet been able or wanted to deal with seriously. This problem is called racism, hatred, intolerance, selfishness, pride, excessive thirst for power and desire to dominate. It is strongly rooted in the hearts of Rwandans, where through centuries of practicing a culture based on racist ideology as taught and conveyed through variants of what is known as the Gihanga legend has been instilled. It is this problem that has always poisoned the relations between the human groups in Rwanda.

In fact, the Gihanga legend sanctioned the domination of Hutus and Twas by Tutsis, and allowed the latter to impose a feudal system based on serfdom. The Europeans, when they came at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century maintained and reinforced this elitist system. The situation only changed in 1959 when the oppressed rebelled and set up a democratic and republican system, after the revolution which saw the supporters of the feudal-seigniorial overthrown take the road to exile, because the new system was against their age-old interests. The republican regime had established egalitarian conditions such that, from 1973 especially, there was actual peace among the people in the country. It was the first time in the history of the country that there had been the least tension possible between Hutus and Tutsis. It was prompted by the notions of the 1959 monarchists, as it was revealed by reading the media which prepared the attack, that the RPF launched the attack on Rwanda on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1990, even if the concept of the monarchy had since been put off indefinitely. The conflict, it was pretty obvious, had revived old wounds, had caused political and ethnical tensions, and created an explosive situation on all standpoints. The assassination of President Habyarimana on 6 April 1994, taking place after those of other Hutu leaders, and after the killing of more than 100,000 civilians by the RPF, triggered off the crisis and the country rose up in arms. The events resulting

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from this assassination are in line with this conflict carried out by the RPF and in fact, constituted only a phase.

My analysis will be centered on the following points:

History of the interethnic relations;

The Armed Conflict of 1990 and its impact on the interethnic relations

The Historical Background to multiparty politics in Rwanda

Implication of the Armed Conflict and its impact on the 1994 events;

Demystification of the use of the words : *Interahamwe*, *Inkontanyi*, *Inyenzi*, *Tutsi*.



## I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE INTERETHNIC RELATIONS

### Interethnic Relations before the Colonial period

In Rwanda, the ethnic groups had lived together for a very long time. They had complicated relations, but these relations were characterized by tensions which were sometimes latent sometimes overt. We got to know about these relations during the colonial period through stories and legends, particularly what was referred to as the Gihanga Legend (Gihanga : the one who invests, who creates), the mythical father of the Rwandans through his three sons Gatwa, Gahutu and Gatutsi. It was this legend that founded, explained, justified, spread and instilled in the minds of all the disparity among the three ethnic groups which are the Twas, Hutus and Tutsis.

Relations among these sons of Gihanga were destroyed from the outset since Gihanga (or else Imana-God himself) sanctioned the disparity among his sons : he condemned Gahutu to be the servant of Gatutsi, whereas Gatwa was condemned to begging. He blessed one and cursed the others. The legend which is carefully prepared by the reigning intelligensia is structured in such a way that Gatutsi has all the qualities. He is noble, clever, persevering, sober, cunning, etc., while Gahutu picks up all the weaknesses possible. He is a big eater, foolish, reckless, rash, lacks foresight, irresponsible, etc. Hardly, is Gatwa mentioned. Some legends, finding Gahutu and Gatutsi to be so different, attribute different ancestors to them. The second sometimes descends from Kigwa, sometimes from Kimanuka who, as their names suggest, came from heaven, when it is not Mututsi himself who came as god sent with his brother Kigwa. According to these accounts, Gahutu was allegedly found on earth (Abazigaba), completely ignorant, only divining through someone's facial expression. It was the Batutsi who allegedly taught him everything : fire, metal, agriculture and rearing stock.

The result of this legend is that in the Rwandan elitist society, the *imfura* (noble, Mututsi) could not share a certain number of things with the Muhutu or with the Mutwa, his slaves. Leading to the phenomenon of *Kunena* or social repulsion which entailed refusing to share a meal, using the same drinking straw, drinking in the same milk jug, sharing an accommodation or sometimes even carrying out some activities in the same space. This phenomenon applied also to marriages, which explained why, it was impossible for mixed marriages to take place except for people who were able to make amends.

The legend, widely popularized, was imposed on everybody and was considered to be a historical data. It ended up having an effect on the minds and determining the attitudes and behaviour of both of them. So, it cannot be said that the relations among members of a society were good when among its members there was a phenomenon of rejection or social repulsion. It cannot be said that all is well, when a homogeneous society is formed because of a common ancestor, whereas this mythical ancestor exists to create and justify the disparity and racism to the benefit of the group which is manipulating the legend.

Quite often, some people say that there was an opening one could go from one category to the other. It is necessary to mention straightaway that this change was not automatic. A Hutu did not have to have many cows to become a Tutsi. The phenomenon of "*Kwihutura*" (leaving the Hutu condition) was only a trick which the reigning class used to increase its ranks, its wealth and to weaken the other group. A Hutu who is promoted in this manner was referred to as "*Icyihuture*", which meant that the label "Hutu" never left him. But he had to form an alliance with the Tutsi. On the other hand, a Tutsi who was deprived of his cows always remained a Tutsi, and Hutus felt honoured to marry Tutsi girls. The most important thing was not just the number of herds of cattle, but a certain tradition and a certain notion of nobility.

It is necessary to point out that to assert itself, the *nyiginya* dynasty had always ruthlessly massacred the Hutus who tried to oppose it. We see the example in the treatment reserved for the Hutus in the last regions to be brought into subjection, the regions under Hutu rule and where there were a limited number of Tutsis, and where the massacres were reckless and ruthless and neither women, nor children nor the elderly were spared.

That was the case in Bugoyi, in the Gisenyi region, for the Musinga minority, when the population revolted and drove out Chief Sehene who was imposed under Rwabugiri. The triumvirate Kanjogera-Kabare-Ruhinankiko sent troops under the command of Rukangirashyamba, then others commanded by Rwidegembya. The latter ravaged the region and committed atrocities that have become legendary. Father A. Pages from Nyundo repeated the story as follows:

**“Many had sought refuge in Kibati, on the slopes of the Nyiragongo volcano and in the deep caves of Rwerere. Those who had relatives or friends in the neighbouring province of Bgisha waited there for the agony to end. The unfortunate ones who were surprised or were unable to escape in time were massacred mercilessly. The attackers made the incursion on the region and took the women and children prisoners in order to sell them as slaves to the Uswi people. The atrocities are listed. The poor women on the verge of becoming mothers fell into the hands of the enemy side. Their health did not give any cause for concern to the bullies who run them through with spears : “They will from now on, no longer bring forth enemies”, the brutes shouted out giggling”** (A. Pages, p. 21). These atrocities, it was not surprising, affected the minds and the memory of the group. Tensions between the Hutus and the Tutsis in Bugoyi have always been problematic, as the reports of the Nyondo missionaries indicate, and it is for the simple reason that Hutus did not whole-heartedly accept the philosophy of the Gihanga legend and did not understand why they should be submissive to the Tutsis.

## 2. Interethnic relations during the colonial period : the German protectorate and the Belgian trusteeship.

### (1) Under the Germans.

When the Germans took possession of Rwanda at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, they noted the submissive and slavery relations between the two important groups, one made up of "Watutsi" (Batutsi), the other made up of "Wahutu" (Bahutu), to repeat the words of Dr. R. Kandt. They only noted. They neither invented the words nor the statutes of those whom these words referred to. They then adopted these same words and the structures which they found when they arrived. They sanctioned them. They fossilized them.

What did the Europeans notice? Dr. Kandt notes: **"The Wahutus had a strange behaviour. In the presence of their masters, they are serious and reserved and avoided questions. But immediately the Watutis backs are turned to our side and we are alone with them, they told us virtually everything we wanted to know, and even what we did not want to know, because I was helpless before their requests and their problems when they complained about the oppression they had been subjected to and the complete deprivation of all their rights. On several occasions, I told them to manage by themselves;.."** (quoted by Maniragaba, p. 76). We should not forget that the Europeans arrived after the serious events of Rucunshu which had just weakened the kingdom, and there was then a great terror reigning in the country. The acting Resident, Maw Wintgens wondered if they should continue **"to play the game of the Watutis by supporting them in their claims to be paid tribute"**, shows a **"profound bitterness against the domination of the Watutis ... apparent throughout the country"**, refers to the **"established fact of the Watutsi domination"**, asks questions about the **"current system in which we are playing the unpopular game of allowing that 97% of the population remain deprived of all rights to the benefit of a dominant**

caste..." (Maniragaba, p.78). The atmosphere is therefore tense with the Tutsis on one side, and the Hutus on the other. And the Germans, still in a small number, maintain the system in force, that is to say, the exploitation of the Hutus and the Twas by the Tutsis.

As if it was to prevent any revolt, King Musinga wrote in 1914 to Resident Kandt : "Now, what steps are we going to take towards these Wahutus? As far as I am concerned, I feel that what could prevent these problems is that I should inform the prominent personalities that, each time a man refuses to accomplish a service as before, he arrests him and sends him to me so that I can throw him into prison and give him 25 lashes. The same treatment would be given to those who refuse to pay tax.

If you find that the measure is good, then you should put an additional prison at my disposal, since the prisoners would be many and we also need canes" (Maniragaba, p. 77).

It was therefore a question of making the Hutus work by force and the repressive system was in place for anyone who dared to refuse. Beating was standard. The malaise was on the other hand important so that the King would see himself obliged to take such a step and acknowledge that the prisoners were going to be many. This was already happening in the regions where the *nyiginya* monarchy was already controlling, and where it had already introduced the *ubuhake* system (serfdom), because you should not forget that when the Europeans came, the centralized state had not yet handed over all the regions making up the Rwanda of this present day.

During this period, the relations between the Hutus and the Tutsis were marked with the expeditions which the German Residence and the Musinga court organized to fight the Tutsi pretender Ndungutse supported by the Hutu Chief Rukara, the son of Bishingwe, and by the Mutwa Basebya. The annual reports of the missionaries in Africa (No. 7/1911-1912), District of Rwanda reports :

“The poor victims of the war were in their thousands : dead, wounded, prisoners taken into slavery, etc.” That took place in 1912 and we understand what represented thousands, in those days. These expeditions covered the region between Burenga, near Byumba, and the Gishwati forest, covering part of Byumba, the entire Ruhengeri *prefecture* and part of Gisenyi. The diaries and the reports of the missionaries and also, A. Kagame state :**“all these regions which were the theatre of fierce fighting were conquered and burnt down”** (Kagame, A., an abridged version of the History of Rwanda, p. 167). What was most outstanding to the people was the relentlessness and cruelty, with which the *Inkamba*, the troops of the Tutsi elite commanded by Rwubusisi, applied themselves to their massacres, lootings and destruction everywhere.

So in this way, the Germans had had the time, before they were chased out, to help the Tutsi-*nyiginya* dynasty set up a centralized state within the borders which they retained afterwards. They allegedly helped to pacify the country and took the *ubuhake* system (serfdom) even to areas where it was inexistent, with the injustices, frustrations and the cruelty which accompanied it.

## (2) Under the Belgians

The Belgians who replaced the Germans after the First World War did not change anything in their relations with the people in Rwanda. They followed the same system and even aggravated tensions. They appointed a Tutsi Chief in place of the Hutu, in the last regions where there were no chiefs yet. They committed what Jean Mukimbili referred to on the antennas of Radio-Rwanda on 6 April 1998, as the **“political and administrative genocide on the Hutus”**.

The injustices, frustrations and prejudices done to the people in these regions and of which the factor was the tandem White-Tutsi, can never be assessed. These sentiments existed among all those who were subjected to the same system of exploitation and were deprived of their rights, but these are of a

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special character because of the proximity of the events in the old days and the authority they could exert on those who had been eye-witnesses or those whose relatives had actually lived through it.

The Belgians' role cannot be separated from that of the Catholic Missionaries who advised them. I would therefore say that the responsibility of the European Catholic Missionaries, particularly that of their authorities, was heavy in exacerbating the relations among the ethnic groups in Rwanda. I recall immediately that they are not the ones who invented these stories about the Hutus and the Tutsis, as some people often want to make us believe. But their attitude and their choice of policies unfortunately, in favour of the Tutsis has further opened up a gulf between both of them. The position and the philosophy of *Mgr. L. Classe* on the subject have constituted a blessing and sanctioning which was not expected of an apostle of Christ. They strengthened the Tutsis in the notion that their ethnic group was superior. The seriousness of the Prelate's remarks can be seen in the following passages :

**"If we want to place on the practical point of view and think about the real interest of the country, we have in the Mututsi youth an incomparable element of progress, that all who know Rwanda cannot underestimate. Eager to learn, willing to know about what comes from Europe, as well as imitating the Europeans, enterprising, sufficiently aware that ancestral customs no longer have reason for being, retaining nonetheless the political meaning of old and the tact of their race in order to lead men, these young people are a force for the well-being and the economic future of the country.**

**When the Bahutus are asked whether they prefer to be commanded by people of common birth or by nobles, the response is unquestionable; they prefer the Batutsis, and for good reason. Born leaders, these people have a sense of command..."** (Letter to Mr. Morteau, 21 September 1927, in de Lacger, L., p. 523).



In 1930, *Mgr. Classe* wrote again in a report submitted to the Belgian Government : "The greatest mistake... that the Government could do to itself and to the country would be to do away with the Mututsi caste. A revolution of this kind will lead the country straight into anarchy and communism with anti-European hatred. Far from promoting progress, it destroys the action of the Government, depriving the auxiliaries born who are capable to understand it and follow it. It is the view and the intimate conviction of all the authorities in the mission in Rwanda without exception... As a general rule, we would not have better leaders, more intelligent, more active, more capable of understanding the progress and even more acceptable to the people than the Batutsis. It is particularly and above all, with them that the Government would be able to develop Rwanda from all standpoints"(de Lacger, L., p.524).

As if it is to confirm these remarks, de Lacger outlines the experience of the Hutu chiefs: "The Bahutus, promoted to chieftdom, lacked prestige and authority. They were a sorry sight in the presence of the great feudal lords, whom they seemed to be displacing. They were not able to acquire this fascinating influence, which the humble, instinctively traditionalists, put up with defencelessly in the presence of a superior in a hereditary situation, with a typical statuary physique, manners, fortune" (de Lacger, p. 523).

What was called into question, was not the competence or the moral integrity of the chiefs, but a certain amount of authority supposed to be inborn, hereditary, the typical physique, wealth and influence which their combination bestowed. In all that resulted a great superiority and an inborn domination brought about by the Gihanga legend.

Belgium was convinced of Classe's argument. It reorganized the country, drove out Musinga, appointed his son Rudahigwa in his place on the recommendation



of the same Classe, and marked out the country with the help of its Tutsi civil servants, **“having authority from birth, legitimacy, tradition, fortune, competence”**. It was of **“noble blood, and government which knew how command its citizens”**(de Lacger, p. 558).

How much were the civil servants earning? This nobility was living at the expense of the Hutus, possibly, the poor Tutsi. That was how the Belgian trusteeship assigned **“to each member of the feudal hierarchy a sufficient number to do the master’s bidding...”**. And to avoid the dismissed civil servant lords from becoming destitute, **they were allocated the usufruct of their own piece of property including some *bagaragu* [serfs] tenant farmers”**, Hutus were to work for them, in the house, in the fields or to keep their cows. During all this time, serfdom, drudgery, lashing and heavy taxation were fully implemented. This situation lasted until the fifties.

### (3) The role of the school

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When the missionaries were admitted to Rwanda under Musinga, they established catechism schools, which the Tutsi class refused to have anything to do with under the influence of the court. Only the humble people, the Hutus, attended them, out of sheer curiosity but also out of interest. The missionaries also established a school in Nyanza, for the children of the Tutsi nobility. It was later on that the Tutsis swarmed the churches and schools, when they saw that the Hutus who had joined the new religion felt rather comfortable with it. Gradually, the Tutsis, assisted in that by the missionaries and the colonials, went as far as monopolizing the schools which, next to the cows, became another instrument of monopolizing power and benefits. In the schools budding almost everywhere, the Fathers regularly mentioned the presence of the Tutsis, sometimes as privileged, sometimes as dominating or impressive.

- In Gatsibu (Byumba), at the Government school, there were about a hundred Batutsi youth (Rwamagana parish priest, 1928);
- In Kigali, at the Residence, the White Fathers noted and again, at their own expense paid for the schooling of the sons of the chiefs in the school which the Germans had founded. They noted in 1928: **"At present, we have 7 classes of young Batutsis. They are coming to us in greater numbers, and we no longer know where to accommodate them"**;
- In Mibirizi during the same period, **"when the Government maintained a so-called Batutsi primary school..."**;
- In the *Josephite* Brothers congregation, the same tendency was noted particularly, with the primary school teachers. At a certain point, L de Lacger wrote : **" The society and the people had great respect for the Bayozefiti. They were the instructors of the rising generation. They had a high reputation for knowledge and wit. They even have that of birth and rank... In the ratio of four-fifths, if not more, they are hired by the Batutsi caste"** (de Lacger, 1., p. 600);
- Concerning the Benebikira people, the author noted : **"The Black Sisters, they also, forming an independent congregation were recruited, in large numbers into the Batutsi caste"** (*ibid.*, p.601);
- *L'Ecole d'Astrida* : Without exclusion from the principle, the students admitted were in the majority of cases, from the family of the ruling class. The parents who could afford it, particularly the chiefs especially, paid annually for each of

their children a lump sum of 700 francs, in return, the students got board, clothing, their laundry done for them, were taught, and provided with school supplies" (*ibid.* p.571). The question was how the Hutu was going to be able to find such an amount. So, as a matter of fact that was the exclusion.

On the whole, the schools show the disparity among the ethnic groups, those that were in principle, open at the ethnic group level, were not at the level of wealth insofar as only the rich people could gain access there. The study carried out by Hanf and his team indicated the following comparative table for the 1956 period :

Ethnic Groups	Population in %	Total number of students	Secondary	Disparity	Secondary
				Index ity Primary	
Hutu	82.74	67.70	39.10	0.82	0.47
Tutsi	16.59	32.10	60.90	1.93	3.37
Twa	0.67	0.20	-	0.30	-

In the light of this table, an important imbalance is noted right from the primary school, but which is not serious. But when we go to the secondary level, the balance of the lower level is inverted. Tutsis are in the majority, whereas the Twas do not even exist. The disparity index which in a normal situation revolves round uniformity, shows big differences. This fact was linked to the screening factors which were birth, fortune or the wealth of parents, as well as tricks used to discourage the Hutus, resulting always in the famous Gihanga legend of the sort : what good is it to study, since it is only the Tutsis who will become chiefs, agronomists, secretaries, etc.

The disparities at the level of education is inevitably shown at the level of employment, and the system also added its own, in the sense that, even with equal qualifications, the Tutsi came first. In 1959, there were 43 Tutsi chiefs against 2 Hutus, and 549 Tutsi sub-chiefs against 10 Hutus. In other sectors, 88% Tutsis against 12% Hutus was noted. All that is the result of a culture and a racist policy deliberately maintained by the Belgians and by the Tutsi oligarchy. Within the State body that was set up at the close of the elections for which the process entailed levels of screening, there were 32 Tutsi members and 1 Hutu member! Many analysts deemed that these elections reflected the opposite of the people's wish.

On this subject, the book **Inganji Kalinga** by A. Kagame could be referred to, its aim was to show that the country was set up only by the Tutsis, and that they did not borrow anything from the Hutus, and also that the latter, had never had "abami" [kings], only "abahinza" (rain magicians, petty kings, possibly rebels). This concern conveyed an ambient racist ideology in the forties. Strangely, after the institutions changed in 1959, and the young University graduate-researchers emerged, Kagame concluded that in fact, these people who were being referred to as the "abahinza" in 1940, were indeed "abami", and even better, that even the Tutsi kings went through this stage when their kingdom was still tiny, and that the Hutu kings were re-baptized "abahinza", after their kingdoms were conquered by the *nyiginya* dynasty. What is interesting to note here is this desire to change the names of the institutions and the titles of the Hutu prominent personalities who no longer existed, and consequently, had to be removed from the history of Rwanda. That showed a mere negative attempt of the other, and consequently, revealed the ambiguity in the relations among the sons of Gihanga. And as far as this is concerned, Kagame was not alone, since Father M. Pauwels had the same attitude about Nyamakwa, the last "umwami" of the Kingogo, because of the mere fact that he was neither slender, nor did he have the majestic bearing of the Batutsi feudal lords (Pauwels, M, p.46).

## (4) Awareness of social discontent

The discrimination and injustices which characterised the feudal-colonial regime eventually made the people of Rwanda – especially the Hutus who were its most affected victims - fed up with it. The discontent was expressed by Hutus who had managed to slip through the net, particularly former seminarians or priests. The democratic experiences initiated around 1952 and the elimination of forced labour did not change anything because those measures were not taken whole-heartedly. The Tutsi class had for a long time maintained its superiority complex, so any idea of change, democracy, equality and freedom for all was inconceivable and unacceptable. With the prospect of de-colonisation, the relationship between the two important groups, that is, the Hutus and the Tutsis, gradually worsened. Faced with the demand from Hutu leaders to King Rudahigwa for more social justice for all the children of Gahanga, the Tutsi class adopted a hard line and a group of Court loyalists gave the following response: *"People who call for the sharing of a common heritage are people who have a fraternal relationship between them. However, the relationship between us (Batutsi) and them (Bahutu) has always been and is still based on serfdom. There is therefore no basis whatsoever for fraternity between them and us (...)"*

*History tells us that Ruganzu killed many 'Bahinza' (petty kings). He and our other Kings conquered the country of the Bahutu whose kings were Bahinzas. All the details are in 'Inganji Kalinga'. So, since our Kings conquered the country of the Bahutu, how can they now claim that they are our brothers?"* (A. Nyagahene, in *Les Relations interethniques*, pp. 39-40).

That was the type of relationship between the Tutsi and the Hutu as seen by most Tutsis who benefited from the feudal-monarchic regime in 1959. The progressive leaders of that time, both Hutus and Tutsis, and, in particular, the people who had been the victims of the system for centuries did not want it any more. It was the intransigence of one side and the firmness of the other side

regarding what they considered to be their rights that led to the 1959 revolution and the violence that had immediately sparked it off or accompanied it.

On the other hand, however, the Catholic Church hierarchy at that time had weighed the seriousness of the situation because Mgr. A. Perraudin - Mgr. Classe's successor - noted, shortly before appearance of the document which has been known since then as '*Manifeste des Bahutu*' [The Bahutu Manifesto], *"In our Rwanda, social differences and inequalities are, for the greater part, linked to racial differences in that, on the one hand, wealth and, on the other hand, political power are, in reality, in the hands of people belonging to the same race. This state of affairs is the heritage of a past that is not up to us to judge. It is obvious, however, that this de facto situation no longer meets the norms of a sound organisation of Rwanda society and poses to government leaders delicate and inescapable problems..."*

*The institutions of a country should be able to provide all its inhabitants and legitimate social groups with the same fundamental rights and possibility of human advancement and ability to participate in public affairs. Institutions given to supporting a regime of privileges, favouritism and protection of individuals or of social groups would not be in conformity with Christian morality "* (De Lacger, 1., p.716). The prelate weighs his words but everyone knows where he is in those words. He does not talk about intelligence and nobility. He is talking about justice.

It has to be pointed out that the problem was posed in social terms and that Hutu leaders were not against Tutsis; they were against a regime which preached the superiority of Tutsis over other ethnic groups. This explains the fact that, from the beginning, progressive Tutsis such as Ndazaro and Bwanakweri, founders of the RADER party, allied themselves to APROSOMA and MDR parties. Moreover, it has to be pointed out that, initially, MDR, which later became MDR PARMEHUTU, was in favour of a constitutional monarchy system modelled on European countries.

The political struggles, which really took off in 1959, went through a rapid radicalisation, followed by ethnic bipolarisation which was, in particular, a consequence of the intransigence of the Monarchist party, UNAR. An ordinary event set fire to the gunpowder: Young Tutsis attacked the Hutu leader, D. Mbonyumutwa, in Byimana near Gitarama. The news spread and set ablaze the whole country, leading to what would be known as "The 1959 Social Revolution".

What was the role of the missionaries and Belgium during those events? Missionaries and Belgium never changed the relationship of inequality when they had all the means to do so. They had an interest in not doing so. The unequal relationship was put to an end in 1959. Feeling that the end of its rule was approaching and finding itself incapable of containing the discontent of the oppressed people and, finally, experiencing a crisis of confidence with its former faithful protégés, the colonial power simply left things the way they were, particularly since some of its civil servants did not espouse the ideas of 1930. With regard to the Catholic Church, it followed the winds of change, maybe because its new head, a Swiss who hailed from a country without a colonialist tradition, was more sensitive to the problems of the oppressed. However, we cannot avoid emphasising that the Church took a very long time to realise that the system was iniquitous or, in any case, to acknowledge it.

### **3. Interethnic relations after 1959**

#### **(1) Under the First Republic (1961 -1973)**

Having learnt that the principles of equality, justice and democracy governed the lives of the people in the white man's country who, however, did not bother to enforce them in their colonies, some leaders struggled to apply them in their countries. Therefore, they dreamt of a community in which exploitation, social



injustice, inequality and racism would be banned, a community that would offer the same opportunities to everybody, where the same rules would apply to everyone. I believe that if the Hutus had been driven by a will to revenge, this would have resulted in a disastrous situation which the withdrawing colonial power would have been unable to manage.

The leaders of the Hutu reformist party won. They set up democratic and republican institutions thereby establishing freedom and equality of all citizens before law. Unfortunately, the revolution did not pave the way for peace because the young Republic was immediately confronted with attacks from the monarchists who rejected the new institutions and excluded themselves from the democratic game after their defeat at the referendum organized by the UN on 25 September 1961, referendum which abolished the monarchy with over 70% of the votes. The objective of the attackers known under the code name "*Inyenzi*" *Ingangurarugo yiyemeje kuba Inyenzi* was to restore the abolished monarchy.

The attacks lasted until 1967 and seriously affected the relation between Hutu and Tutsis. Therefore, the first task of the Republic was to reconcile its people that 400 years of feudality, to which was added another half a century of the imposition of feudal/ colonial exploitation, had deeply divided. In that regard, the Republic had to consider the interest of everybody: Hutu, Twa and Tutsi, and, at the same time, had to contend with the largest section of the Tutsis. Tutsis who had not gone into exile were not often trusted and were suspected of being accomplices of the attackers. At the same time, the leaders in exile criticized them for collaborating with the new regime. Their position was not always very easy. Interethnic relationship was sensitive.

However, the political will of the Kayibanda Government was such that he appealed to the refugees to return home; the only thing he required was for them to comply with the laws of the Republic. His appeals did not convince the refugees because they were solidly protected by UNAR leaders who had



promised them a triumphal return. The reprisal attacks launched by *Inyenzi* which claimed victims among the Tutsis constituted an additional reason for them not to return home.

However, with time, some refugees returned to the country and were warmly welcomed. A.T. Nyetera, a Tutsi who lived in Rwanda under the monarchy, under the two Republics and who fled the Kagame regime attested that: *"The Hutus and Tutsis, I mean those who did not go into exile, lived together with a degree of tolerance. They tolerated each other without problems, until those who had left the country tried to come back armed (A.T. Nyetera pg21 )"*

After the *Inyenzi* suspended their attacks, there was a lull. The Hutu-Tutsi problem became acute again in 1972 following the Burundi incidents during which hundreds of thousands of Hutus were attacked by the Tutsi army of the Micombero regime. Survivors sought refuge in Rwanda, Tanzania and Zaire. One should bear in mind that the relationship between the governments of both countries had not been cordial since the 1959 revolution and that Kigali had often accused Burundi of supporting the attackers of Rwanda. It was against the background of the problem between the two capitals that an ethnic and regional malaise emerged in Rwanda resulting in the Tutsis being flushed out of public and private institutions. Some people were killed and others went into exile. The matter was presented in a fairly brief manner and described as Hutu extremism; however, the real cause of the malaise was never stated. For example, the lobby role in extremist Tutsi refugee circles in Burundi was never mentioned.

## **(2) Under the Second Republic (1973-1990)**

What were the effects of the 1973 coup on interethnic relations one may ask? It could be said that it prevented the relationship from deteriorating; it restored and improved them. For J. Habyarimana blamed G. Kayibanda and the hard

core members within his entourage for marginalizing or excluding other Rwandans on ethnic and regional grounds. All Tutsis who had been chased from public and private institutions and from schools were reinstated.

Since then, Habyarimana has not stopped preaching peace and national unity. Some even said that he favours the Tutsis and scandalously privileged them particularly in the areas of finances and education in spite of the ethnic and regional balance policy.

With respect to the life of the Tutsi under the Second Republic, A.T. Nyetara describes the situation in the following terms: *"The Tutsi ...should not ignore their political and economic situation under the First Republic until 5 July when President Habyarimana took power. Tutsis should remember that before then, none of them had a flourishing business talk less of occupying the post of Director General or Secretary General in any ministry. None of them had ever held a ministerial post. Tutsis should remember that after 5 July 1973, none of them was ever persecuted as a result of their ethnic background. On the contrary, thanks to Habyarimana and his tolerance policy, I can give the names of some Tutsis economic operators, (Nyetara pp 10-11 ) Much later, he adds: "With General Habyarimana's coup d' etat, there has been some respite since 1973. I would even describe it as real peace. Unfortunately, once again, there is little trust. This did not prevent business transactions between Hutu and Tutsi and marriages were consummated. I should mention in passing that, with respect to marriages, Tutsis men rarely married Hutu women.*

I have cited this long quotation from someone who can not be suspected of being a Hutu extremist to prove that under the Second Republic, there was a genuine desire for peace and national harmony. Speeches by government officials reechoed that issue. The Achilles' heel was the 1959 refugee problem which was not resolved on time. I am however convinced that within the context of the Rwandan tragedy, the problem was used more as a pretext than a

genuine reason because refugees who so desired, still returned to the country and were reintegrated in daily activities. Lastly, that peace and harmony was so real that the RPF had problems convincing the Tutsis in the country to benefit from it as stated by C. Hakizabera in his testimony: *"A destabilization and demonization programme headed by Mbaguta who is assisted by Augustin Maharangali has been set up. Our team encountered several problems at the beginning, because it was not an easy task to convince the Tutsis and their Hutu brothers-in-law. Most of those contacted were hesitant and sometimes, they did not hesitate to criticize us. It was necessary to adopt new and violent means, which ranged from intimidation to murder in order to make them change their minds."* (C. Hakizabera, p2). It is therefore clear from this testimony that the Tutsis in the country were under a lot of pressure to join the RPF or work for them because the RPF believed in peace.

## II. THE ARMED CONFLICT AND ITS EFFECTS ON INTERETHNIC RELATIONS

As seen in the previous chapter, until 1990, the relationship between Hutus and Tutsis was cordial and relaxed. What I mean is that there was no theory expounding the superiority of one over the other. I am not referring to individuals but to groups. When the news of the invasion of Mutara region which borders Uganda was received, it generated surprise, amazement and terrible shock. With respect to war experience, the only memory that Rwandans had thereon was the *Inyenzi* attack of the 1960s. National and International media stated that the attackers had come from Uganda and were descendants of 1959 Tutsi refugees. The attackers repeatedly aired their grievances: fight against dictatorship, installation of democracy, return of refugees. Progressively, their objectives became clearer: power, the criticism of the regime in place since 1959. The Tutsi issue was being broadcast on all channels reporting the conflict. President Museveni knew his "boys" are invincible. The RPF stated that it would capture Kigali very soon; some say in five days.

In spite of the efforts deployed by the RPF who claimed that they were not a Tutsi army, the conflict was taking on an ethnic character given the composition of the army. The conflict has claimed its first Hutu civilian victims. The first set of displaced persons are arriving in the country. Information was going around about the atrocities committed on civilians. Therefore, people were beginning to ask questions especially as attackers state that they are not fighting alone but were being supported by the population. The population was wondering who the people supporting the RPF were. People were saying to themselves: since it is not me, then it must be the others. Who are the others? My neighbours? My colleagues? My friends? Tutsis? The first signs of suspicion emerged during the massive arrest of persons thought to be accomplices in the night of 4 to 5 October 1990.

Officially, there was an attack on Kigali. Fighting broke out. However, with the announcement by the international media that the RPF was near Kigali, that the RPF said it would capture Kigali in five days, there was an obsessive fear of the presence of the enemy in Kigali. It was as if every body expected Kigali to be attacked that night. I visited Kigali when I was returning from a mission to Butare which commenced on 1 October. Kigali was emptying of its inhabitants who were heading to the centre and south [of the country]. It was easy to enter into Kigali but difficult to get out because of the very long queue. We did not stay long in Kigali because we had to be in Ruhengeri before the curfew. In order to avoid the long queue that we had noticed as we were leaving Kigali for Gitarama, we headed for Byumba where nobody went and 15 kilometres from Kigali, we took the old Ruhengeri road. The following day, we heard about the shooting in Kigali on the radio.

Therefore, the first effect of the conflict on interethnic relations was that it created a climate of fear of the other person, an atmosphere of doubt and suspicion. For, it was not only the Hutus who were scared. The Tutsis were

also scared, and, with the arrests, they had every right to doubt their safety. President Habyarimana who was in the United States when the attack was launched never stopped warning the people against amalgamation. Would that be enough? Nobody was able to summarize the prevailing climate as effectively as Nyetera *"Some Hutu have not hidden their animosity and their hostility towards Tutsis...As for the Tutsis, their joy was tinged with fear. One thing was certain, almost all of them were fond of the RPF. Some shouted it out loud.* (A.T. Nyetera p21).

It could therefore be said that the conflict brought the Hutu-Tutsi problem to the surface and reopened old wounds that had begun to heal. Though some Tutsis were rejoicing at the thought of seeing their monopoly on power restored, what was the reaction of those who had directly or indirectly experienced the dark years of feudal and colonial system or the reaction of their descendants? When the RPF was repelled on 31 October, there were demonstrations in support of the army by Hutus as well as Tutsis. That could lead one to conclude that among the Tutsis were those who were against the war or who, at least, advocated peace.

As the conflict raged on, it progressively created a gulf between ethnic groups but one could not talk of a complete split because Hutus and Tutsis still worked together in various political parties, particularly within the MDR, MRND, PSD, PL PDC etc until 6 April 1994. I highlight below, some, but not all, acts or incidents linked to the conflict which had a negative impact on interethnic relations and political relations.

#### **1. The reason for the war and the enemy to fight**

The war initiated by the RPF through the Habyarimana and Kayibanda regimes was against the 1959 social revolution which freed the people of Rwanda and the Hutus in particular from the feudal and colonial regime. Those who viewed

the issue in that manner had every reason to be alarmed and suspicious of, if not all Tutsis in general, of at least refugee Tutsis. The enemies to fight were the "inyangarwanda" (enemies of Rwanda). The *inyangarwanda* were defined in *Huguka* newspaper as:

*..abategesti bacu bagikandamiza abaturage ku buryo ubwo aribwo bwose"*  
(our leaders who, in which ever way possible, still crush,-oppress- the people).

*"abandi banzi b'u Rwanda tubasanga muri rubanda. Abo rero ni babi kurusha na bamwe ba mbere...Muri abo rero bamwe barira ubujiji, abandi ugasanga barashyize inda imbere ya byose. (As for the other enemies of Rwanda, we will find them among the people. They are even worse than the former enemies...some of them are victims of ignorance, others are putting their interests first.) Bangamwabo et al. in Les Relations interethniques au Rwanda p. 240).* It is probably this manner of viewing the enemy which led to the large-scale massacres that caused panic and mass exodus every time the RPF advanced. And, it is shocking to read that the worst enemies are among the population though there was often a tendency to blame the leaders for everything.

## 2. Atrocities committed on Hutu civilians

The conflict regularly claimed civilian victims who were killed by the RPF outside the hostilities and under very horrifying conditions with the use of methods which brought back memories of the feudal regime. As the RPF army was mostly made up of Tutsis from the Ugandan army, some of the Rwandans who contacted survivors generally got the impression that perpetrators of the massacres were Tutsis.

## 3. The accord between some political parties and the RPF

At the meeting between the RPF and the FDC (FDC-Democratic Forces for Change made up of the MDR, PSD, PL political parties) in Brussels in June 1992, the FDC joined forces with the RPF in favour of war. From that time onwards, part of the public considered the FDC, or, at least its leaders, as traitors to the national cause because of their alliance with the attackers of the country. That led to tension between the members of both sides.

#### 4. Selective recruitment of Tutsi Youths by the RPF

The recruitment of Tutsi youths by the RPF, particularly after the cease-fire of 1 August 1992, executed under the supervision of Karenzi Karake, RPF officer with GOMN, and the subsequent dispatch of youths to RPF military camps by the leaders of pro-RPF wings of the MDR, PSD and PL in May-June 1993 stirred up ethnic tensions in the areas the youths came from. Hutu neighbours feared for their safety.

#### 5. Massacres of civilians following the 8 February 1993 attack

The 23 February attack right in the middle of the Arusha negotiations claimed 40,000 victims in Byumba and Ruhengeri *préfectures* and created about 1,000,000 displaced persons. Most of the victims were murdered in cold-blood because of their ethnic background or political leanings. A letter by the Ruhengeri prefectural committee to missions accredited to Rwanda contained the following: *"After cramming them in abandoned houses or classrooms and torturing them by gouging out their eyes or mutilating them, the RPF kills its victims either with grenades or bullets or chemical weapons and only the Inkotanyi keep the macabre secret. Everywhere the RPF went or were stationed, there were lamentations, wailings and desolation. The people of Ruhengeri and Byumba are currently experiencing a real genocide. As a matter of fact, pregnant women are being disemboweled, children and women are being stabbed to death, men are being mutilated and bleed to death."*



Current or former local civilian authorities around the combat zones were particularly being targeted because they had failed to succumb to RPF pressure and anyone who fell into their hands was eliminated.

That was how in Ruhengeri, M.T. Gasana, *Bourgemestre* of Kinigi commune, (a commune bordering Mukingo) and M.N. Barezi, former *Bourgemestre* of Nyamugali were murdered. Barezi was killed with his wife in atrocious conditions. In particular, the RPF was targeting local officials who represented an obstacle to it advancing because they had succeeded in maintaining harmony among the people. No local official known to have fallen into the hands of the RPF survived. For example, L. Bagurijoro, *Bourgemestre* of Nyamutera was murdered in 1994. F. Maniragaba of Kigombe was killed when he returned from exile. Kinigi, Kigombe and Nyamutera communes are all neighbouring communes to Mukingo of which Kajelijeli was *bourgemestre*. Survivors are still languishing in prison or were in custody for years on end without trial. In Ruhengeri like in Byumba, officials who entered the so-called demilitarized zone after the signing of the Arusha Accords were hunted by the RPF and those who were unable to escape before 6 April 1994 were murdered in cold blood. This was particularly attributable to the crushing defeat the RPF suffered at the 1993 elections. When they returned from exile, former officials including those who fled their area well before February 1993, were either murdered or imprisoned.

Let's return to the 8 February 1993 attack; the RPF objectives were clear: they wanted to negotiate from a position of force for the attack had enabled them reach Rulindo which was about 50km from Kigali. The country was greatly shock by the cruel nature and scale of the massacres. For the first time, the people of Kigali were faced with the stark reality of the effects of the war. They became aware of the situation because they saw the inhumane conditions and misery under which the displaced were crammed outside Nyacyonga town and in the large Gaseke, Mugambazi and Rushahsi camps lived. They saw many of



them who came into town to beg. For the ordinary on-looker, the person to blame was the RPF who had chased all those people from their homes. A political and ethnic tension emerged which undermined the FDC and some its members did not understand why the RPF had launched such an attack while it was negotiating with a government delegation led by their coalition. The problem was thenceforth seen as a pro or anti RPF matter.

## 6. Negotiations and the Arusha Peace Accord

The mess and confusion which characterized the Arusha negotiations revealed the division which characterized the Rwandan political class at that time. In that regard, Mr. Twagiramungu stated the following before the French Parliamentary Committee: *"the monopolization of peace negotiations by some Ministers of the opposition and the RPF"* This is no more no less the acknowledgement of the role played by M. Twagiramungu's party because the person who monopolized the negotiations was B. Ngulinzira who was defending Twagiramungu's position. By the same token, Twagiramungu acknowledged that another party had been marginalized and that that had had negative effects on the negotiations. However, this is not very true. Must I add that the media that criticized these acts were labeled extremists? The UN group in charge of drawing lessons from UNAMIR pertinently noted that: *"the Security Council tended to consider the situation in Rwanda as a small civil war"* By so doing *"one has remained silent on or has failed to examine the political conflicts within the Rwandan Government and the constant evidence of politically motivated murders and human rights violations in the country."* (*Enquete sur la tragedie rwandaise p201*). They have never borne in mind the fact that the negotiators were the RPF and those with whom they had formed an alliance for the 1992 war. It was therefore not surprising that the result was an accord which many labeled as unrealistic. L.R. Mervn reports that: *"Hermen Cohen, who was the American Under-secretary of State for African Affairs until 1993, said he was shocked when told of the deal reached at Arusha; it was too*

*favourable to the RPF. Cohen said that the international community's obsession with getting an agreement led to a lack of analysis and a failure to consider or not the Accords could be implemented. The idea of stationing RPF soldiers in Kigali, Cohen thought was folly... Diplomats who took part in Arusha warned that so advantageous was this deal to the RPF that the hardliners could never accept it.* (L.R. Melvern pp101-102). Everybody knew that the negotiations were not going as expected, that the accord was unbalanced and unrealistic but responsibility was being avoided and anyone who criticized them was labeled an extremist in advance. That is a very important point because it was that, among other things, which led to the failure of the setting up of transition institutions and the ensuing blockage.

#### **7. Politically motivated murders**

The murders of civilians, sometimes Hutu and sometimes Tutsi, (Bugesera, Kibirira, Mutura, Kirambo, Kinihira etc) increased tension. The problem was that these murders were often used for political ends. Another facet of the problem was that the international community only focused attention on Tutsi victims though the death of Hutu who were not of the opposition, that is, distance from or opposed to the RPF was greeted with indifference.

#### **8. Declarations by some leading politicians often stirred up tension and hatred.**

- 1) When the RPF captured part of Byumba killing thousands of defenseless civilians, M. Twagiramungu stated that there was no problem because Byumba was in the hands of its brothers. That appeared rather cynical to the families of victims, displaced persons and the inhabitants of Byumba in general.

- 2) In December 1993, T. Rutaremara of the RPF stated in kinyarwanda in Kinihira that they had "*Ibyitso*" accomplices all over the country who kept them informed of everything that was going on. I do not know if he was provoked into saying that but the use of the term *ibytso* which had a negative connotation contributed to creating an atmosphere of suspicion of the Tutsi s and of members of RPF allied parties or of those considered to be members.
- 3) Some press organs broadcast the murder of President Habyarimana (Isibo, Kangura). One of the FDC leaders even publicly stated that "*Habyarimana napfa impundu zizavuga*" (There were cries of joy at the death of Habyarimana). Such statements could not but worsen the situation and trigger political or ethnic tension. What would people think of such a politician when they learn that indeed Habyarimana had just been assassinated? There may have been such cries of joy but how much tears have his death and the ensuing events caused?

I have given only these examples; however, often, there has been the use of excessive language which created tension and stirred up hatred thereby causing changes in the relation between the people who make up the population and in interethnic relations in particular.

#### 9. Murder of M. Ndadaye in Burundi

The assassination of President M. Ndadaye of Burundi on 21 October 1993 by a segment of the Tutsi army plunged Burundi into chaos and violence which has continued ten years on. It heightened ethnic tension in Rwanda because everything that happens in one country always has repercussions on the other. His election in June 1993 generated a lot of optimism which contributed to

promoting Arusha talks. His assassination led to a dramatic change among most RPF Hutu allies. During a meeting in support of the Burundian people, M.F. Karamira, one of the MDR party leaders who according to J. Gasana was formerly in charge of the fund contributed by the RPF to destabilize the *Interahamwe*, launched the expression "Hutu power" in Kigali. Therefore, "Hutu power" was not coined somewhere in Ruhengeri or in Gisenyi as readily stated by some people. The death of Ndadaye led to political and ethnic bipolarization in Rwanda because after the incidents in Burundi, the Hutus no longer believed in the Arusha Accords. This is understandable, Tutsis in the country who are not yet RPF members or not from pro RPF parties were very embarrassed.

#### 10. Dissension within political parties

The split of the MDR, PL and PSD into anti and pro RPF political parties after the February 1993 attack became final and concluded the bipolarization of the political landscape. Two forces emerged: the RPF and its few allies from the FDC and some other small parties and the pro-Habyarimana group comprising the MRND, all the anti RPF/FDC section, the CDR and other small anti RPF parties. The new political landscape was unusual in the sense that the RPF was militarily strong and continued to arm itself though politically weak, I would even say moribund. However, since the advent of multiparty politics, President Habyarimana had never been so popular and so politically strong. The alliance with his former fierce critiques such as Mugenzi, Karamira or Murego proved to the public that he was right. However, FAR was very weak, handicapped by the embargo, the presence of the RPF battalion and its infiltrators in Kigali and UNAMIR harassment.

## 11. Assassination of Hutu leaders

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The selective assassination of Hutu leaders also played a negative role in the advancement of inter-ethnic relations. On the one hand, it recalled the assassinations of Hutu leaders from 1959 -1960, and on the other hand, these leaders were generally assassinated soon after they had made unfavourable statements about or gestures towards RPF. This was the case of F. Rwambuka who opposed the recruitment of Tutsi youth by RPF when he was still *Bourgmestre* of Kanzenze. It was a similar case with E. Gapyisi, a member of the MDR Political Bureau and MDR Chairman in Gikongoro, who had just established "*Forum paix et démocratie*" (Peace and Democracy Forum) and who had resolutely declared his opposition to recourse to arms. This was also the case of F. Gatabazi, who made a statement in the same vein much later (A. T. Nyetera, p. 9). And it was also the case of Habyarimana who stood as the sole obstacle to the takeover of power by force, on account of his political weight. His assassination benefited RPF that was suspected of being responsible for the crime and bred a heightened mistrust of anything that could appear to support RPF.

## 12. Role of the media

The media played a major role in exacerbating inter-ethnic relations. Two periods can be distinguished: the media and the publications that prepared the war, and the media born after the start of the conflict.

### (1) Writings and media of the extremist circles of the Tutsi diaspora.

The fundamental problem canvassed by the media that prepared the war centered on the following issues: return of the refugees, the largest majority of whom were Tutsis who left in 1959; restoration of the monarchy abolished in

1959; rejection of the 1959 revolution and of the institutions that ensued therefrom; democracy; and human rights. The objective of these media was to sensitize the Tutsi of the diaspora, to sensitize international public opinion to human rights violations in Rwanda and to sensitize domestic public opinion. Consequently, the campaign aimed at making friends and forming alliances, mobilizing members, destroying the unity of the Rwandan people, and isolating the incumbent regime in Rwanda. In terms of techniques, they resorted to lies, denying facts or minimizing them or else engaging in exaggeration and manipulation. As to content, the said media and writings were marked by hatred, contempt, intolerance, racism and all the complexities that characterized Hutu-Tutsi relationships during the pre-1959 period. One saw a resurgence of the pet topics of that era: *bene Gihanga* (son of Gihanga), *rubanda ou imbaga y'umwami* (the people, the King's subjects), *turacyari imfura* (we are still the same nobles, we have not changed), etc. Reproduced below are some passages that illustrate the climate of lies and manipulation that reigned in those circles, to help give an understanding of the state of mind of the youth who were exposed to that climate and who sometimes believed in it:

- (a) ".....ibyo byose turashaka kubihindura ngo bisubire uko byari mbere....." (...we want to change all this in order to return to the previous situation - meaning 1959) (in "*Les relations interethniques*", p.229);
- (b) "....Urwanda nirubira rukaba/nirwongera rukaba u rwanda" (...when Rwanda will have regained its image) (*ibid*, p. 229);
- (c) "singize ngo noneho twabonye uruvugiro ariko nta kamaro kwihakana umutwe wacu cyangwa se ubwoko. Ahubwo dukwiye kuwugarukaho..." (I am not affirming that we have gained any sort of credit, but it is of no use renouncing our party - UNAR- or

our ethnic origin. On the contrary, we must return to it - the party (*ibid*, p. 229);

- (d) "*Inzira rero iboneye yageza abanyarwanda ku bumwe bidatinzem nti- bijijinganya ni ukuvugurura umutwe wacu. Nibyo byahuza vuba abanyarwanda aho bali hose, kuko yigeze kubahaza, umuntu akumbura icyo yamenye*" (The best way to achieve unity among Rwandans without delay is, no doubt, to restructure our party. This is what will quickly bring together Rwandans where they are, because it has already united them. You are nostalgic only of something that you have already known) (*ibid*. p. 230)
- (e) "*Birakwiye kandi biratunganye birimo n'agakiza guthahna n'umwami....*" (That is noble and good, and it is even salutary to return - to go back to Rwanda - with the King...)( *ibid*, p. 231);
- (f) "*Twongeye kubwira abaturage ngo ntibakomeze kubakura umutima, turacyari imfura, nk'uko mwali mubizi, ikibabaje ni uko abakuru' batuzi bashize bazira ubutindi, abato bakakba barababeshye ngo abatutsi bango abahutu*" ( We again say to the people not to be afraid, we are the same nobles that you knew us to be; what is unfortunate is that the oldest ones that we knew have all died in poverty and that the youth were told lies that the Batutsi hate the Bahutu) (*ibid.*, p. 232);
- (g) "Thus the independence accorded the PARMEHUTU party in 1962, while the party was claiming such independence only for 1990 (sic), was a reward given by the metropolis for 'excellent collaboration'. This party was, therefore, reaping the rewards of



the struggle by the nationalist parties that had militated for the first election" (*ibid*, p234);

- (h) "*Abanyarwanda bazima bali bashinze umutwe wa politike iharanira gihugu*" (The Banyarwanda, sound 'in civic terms and mentally' had founded a political party that was fighting for the country - implying UNAR;
- (i) "*Nyamwinshi y'abanyarwanda bali muli UNAR*" (the majority of Rwandans were members of UNAR (*ibid*, p. 237);
- (j) *Igihe kirageze cyo kuberera (abapfuye bazira revolisiyo n'inkulikizi zayo) no gusenda imisaka*" (It is time to celebrate the final mourning rites for all those (who died during the revolution and the victims of the institutions that were born out it), to move out of these funeral places and to purify it - Rwanda )(p. 241).

These media and publications proffered a number of lies and untruths, the most notorious of which were those that denied established historical facts such as the organization of the referendum by the United Nations on 25 September 1960 when UNAR was defeated and the monarchy abolished. There was an 80% no vote against the monarchy. The UNAR party lost all the other referendums, including those organized at the communal level in 1960 and the elections of 1961, and it was subsequent to those defeats, that the extremist wing led by F. Rukeba permanently drew UNAR towards what A. Kagame referred to as the political suicide of this party: the boycott of all elections and recourse to violence. Other big lies that had adverse effects on the young refugees were the following:

- No Tutsi goes to school, to university
- The Tutsis represent 30 to 35 % of the population (in addition to 2,000,000 refugees, at time when the United Nations High

Commissioner for Refugees gave a figure of nearly 500,000: cf. A. Nyagahene in "*Les relations interethniques au Rwanda*, p.185);

- 45% of Rwandans are members of the *Mouvement national patriotique* (MNP) (National Patriotic Movement).

With respect to education, I shall illustrate the situation from 1987 to 1988 with figures from higher education to show the serious untruth of the assertion on this point: ("*Indice de disparité*" (Index of disparity) in "*Les relations interethniques*, p. 304).

Ethnic group	UNR	Grand Sém	IAMSEA	UACC ESGI ISCPA ISF Total				
Hutu	0.99	0.65	0.64	0.83	0.98	0.81	1.00	0.95
Tutsi	1.19	3.53	4.20	2.53	1.24	2.68	1.07	1.48
Twa	0.11							

Clearly, therefore, there was no exclusion of Tutsis, they were rather solidly represented in all the institutions of higher learning, both public and private.

To come back to the publications of the circles that we have referred to, I would like to cite the following among others: *Impuruza*, *Muhabura*, *Isangano*, *Huguka*, *Inkotanyi*, *Le Patriote*, *Intego*, *Umurinzi*, *Uri* and *The Alliancer*. Among all these, *Impuruza* was the most regular and the publication that harmed inter-ethnic relations the most. Not only did A. Kimenyi of the University of Sacramento offer his columns, but he largely contributed ideas, the most destructive of which was "*Nsingize Gisa umusore utagira uko asa*", a poem dedicated to Rwigema and which appeared in *Impuruza*, No. 17 of December 1990.

With respect to form, it used laudatory language when speaking of Rwigema and his friends, and resorted to insulting, spiteful and degrading language when

talking of his enemies, i.e. those who did not agree with RPF. It used the language that the "*imfura*" used to describe the Hutu. He calls them boars, wild rats, greedy beasts, termites, rascals, wicked, good for nothing, traitors, thieves, ignorant folk pretending to be clever, potbellied, dogs, enemies, predatory vultures, vagabonds, rabble. The Head of State was referred to as "*umuhinza*" (petty king, rebel); and his country as "*i Bwidishyi*" (the mythical country of imbeciles). He compared these enemies that he sought to be combated to **Ngunda**, the mythical Hutu being who could eat tons of sorghum or drink several jugs of beer, by himself. On the contrary, *imfura* (the noble) is brave, important, very respectable and is the guardian par excellence of the national heritage bequeathed by the ancestors; he is the astute intellectual who can manage the affairs of the kingdom single handedly. The enemy will be liquidated or chased away from the country. Kimenyi wrote: "*Ubu twese twambariye urugamba*" (we are all ready for war, for combat).

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This text could be interpreted in an infinite number of ways, but given the nature of this work and of its scope, I shall pose only a few questions:

- What impact did such a speech have on the young refugees in general and on the RPF soldiers in particular (most of whom had never set foot in Rwanda, particularly when they came face to face with the people described as such by Kimenyi?
- What could have been the reaction of the Tutsis in the country to the text when they read it?
- What feelings, attitudes and reactions could the Hutus who read his writings have had towards Tutsis of the diaspora and those within the country?
- What feelings and attitudes could the Tutsis within the country have had towards their Hutu neighbours thinking that they might have read the poem?

I believe that it would not be an exaggeration to say that this poem had very negative effects, particularly when one reads "**bokabura ibibondo**" (let them - the enemies- be deprived of offspring). Because this is the most serious insult that could be addressed to a Rwandan, and it was more than a simple insult since we were at war. This perhaps explains the atrocities and the cruelty that marked the Rwandan conflict. This was a veritable call to collective murder.

SOS Rwanda-Burundi wrote as follows in its 7 June 1998 issue (Dossier 1):

"On p. 94 of issue no. 15 of *Impuruza* (Dossier 1), one also sees a plan to exterminate the Hutu and to exclude them the management of the country when one reads: '.... I once again ask these people to leave in peace [towards the Indian ocean] before it is too late. It is our turn to live in Rwanda. We shall come with the idea of one writer Virgile that he attributes to Anchises when talking to Aeneas: to spare those who submit and to tame the arrogant.....'" (SOS -Rwanda -Burundi, p.10, citing J. P. Komayombi, *Le Rwanda : Nécessité pour une justice juste et impartiale*, p. 9).

On the topic of writings of this type found in such publications, J. G. Rumiya pertinently wrote: "It seems to me that this speech is extremely dangerous for second generation men who have been made to believe that courage is the monopoly of their ethnic group. This is the source of a militarism and a desire for revenge that periodically results in useless bloodshed." (J. G. Rumiya, in *Les relations interethniques*, p. 219). This seems to me to be true because these young people have been manipulated by this hateful, nostalgic and archaic speech that is far removed from the reality of contemporary Rwanda" (Reyntjens, *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs en crise*, p. 144), and its their barbarity that has always sent the population fleeing ahead of them.

## (2) Radio Muhabura and RTLM

Radio Muhabura was a tool for RPF propaganda and media war. In terms of ideas, it served to relay ideas already expressed in the media of the extremist groups and of the Tutsi diaspora. This radio began broadcasting shortly after the start of the conflict. Its coverage extended over the entire country and, hence, was accessible to many people. Its objective was to sensitize the people of Rwanda to the need to overthrow Habyarimana and to install democracy and the rule of law. It did all it could to wage a campaign to isolate the Habyarimana regime both inside and outside the country, and to divide the Rwandan people by setting them against each other (Hutu vs. Tutsi, Kiga vs. Nduga, soldiers vs. civilians, Ruhengeri vs. Gisenyi, etc.), which was to weaken the regime and facilitate the RPF victory. However, the fact that it associated 1959 with crimes, genocide of the Tutsi and the culture of impunity, did not reassure the Hutu as to the desire of RPF for reconciliation and of the sincerity of its intentions.

Radio RTLM was founded much later, and it began broadcasting around late 1993-early 1994 on FM over a limited area due to the fact that it had only one relay station at Muhe in Gisenyi. The most important characteristic of the activities of these radios was that they battled each other over the same topic, namely the 1959 revolution: Muhabura ascribed all kinds of evil to it while RTLM asserted that it had liberated the Hutu from the yoke of Belgian/Tutsi colonialism. Therefore, when one took Radio Muhabura's position as a reference point, RTLM was viewed as extremist. However, this stems from ignorance of Rwanda's history because Radio Muhabura was canvassing the extremist positions of 1959 that had led the country into an impasse. RTLM did nothing but deny or reject the lies broadcast by RPF, Radio Muhabura and the publications by the diaspora media. Its situation can only be well understood in context.

On the other hand, Radio Muhabura's extremism was supported by a number of key personalities some of whom had fully embraced the RPF cause at the time. The Ambassador of Belgium in Rwanda, J. Swinnen acknowledged before the Belgian Senatorial Commission that "... the RPF radio was not always dispassionate either", while Minister L. Delcroix declared that RTLM was 'a counterbalance to Radio RPF.'" According to him, it was as bad as the RPF Radio (SOS Rwanda-Burundi, p. 11). A missionary declared to the Belgian newspaper *De standaard* on 6 May 1994 that: "This radio station Muhabura is just as provocative as the RTLM... One never hears one word of reconciliation" (J. Carrero). With respect to extremism and openness, it should be noted that RTLM offered its airwaves to the leaders of the opposition who made statements contrary to its own, without censoring them. Among these leaders were J. Kavaruganda, F. Ngango and L. Ndasingwa.

### (3) The internal written media

With the advent of multi-party politics in Rwanda in 1999, there was a proliferation of the written media. Over thirty newspapers were introduced in addition to *Imvaho*, the Government newspaper and *Kinyamataka*, the newspaper of the Catholic Church.

In all, these newspapers were started, inspired or influenced by the political parties or their sponsors. Very few of them were independent. The most important ones were *Rwanda Rushya*, *Isibo*, *Ijambo*, *Kanguka*, *Kangura*, *Kiberinka*, *Le tribun du peuple*, *Le Messenger-Intumwa*, *Umuranga* and *Le flambeau*. Some of them defended ideas close to those of RPF, MRND, MDR, CDR or PL. Once again, based on the individual positions on the 1959 revolution, RPF was able to describe some parties as extremist and others as moderate, and the outside world aligned itself to this classification. This is how the media that supported the MDR and SPD parties which, nevertheless, acknowledged the benefits of the 1959 revolution, kept quiet on the matter and

fought against one individual, Habyarimana, and not against a republican or democratic ideology, as that drew the wrath of RPF.

There has often been talk of hate or extremist media, and on that score only the **Kangura** Newspaper and **RTL**M have been described as such, precisely because they defended the achievements of the 1959 revolution. However, left out of the discussion were those to whom these newspapers answered, those who instigated them and above all, what they had written or broadcast. I am sometimes amazed to see people make fun of Rwandans. Elsewhere, you have the extreme left and the extreme right; conservatives and moderates; the Right, the Centre and the Left, etc. In Rwanda alone, where the field represents a rather vast area, there was: RPF which is not said to be moderate or extremist; the moderate Hutus, when they get close to RPF and the extremist Hutus, i.e. all those who do not agree with RPF or who oppose it. So, Rwanda could represent a straight line with only one extreme point. One never wonders whether among the Tutsi, both those inside the country and those outside, there are extremists or moderates, the same thing as if the Tutsi is not affiliated to any region. Is that normal? What is the point of departure or of reference? One always proceeds as if it were RPF.

I therefore believe that there is problem of good sense on the part of those who judge Rwandans. Because one has to get to the bottom of the problem, to see its causes and its origins, otherwise it can never be solved. Relations between the various population groups in Rwanda prior to 1959 were founded on an inequitable and racist philosophy. After 1959, there was real harmony in interethnic relations all the time that it was accepted that all citizens were equal before the law, that no ethnic group was superior to the other. The relations began to deteriorate from the moment someone came to say he was challenging 1959 and its achievements.



#### (4) The media and international agencies.

We saw that prior to launching their attack on Rwanda, the attackers waged a sensitization campaign on the international public opinion. This is how certain media allowed themselves to be manipulated or became partial. The concern to verify information and critical judgement was often missing, and some reports were often characterized by sensationalism. I therefore share the viewpoint of J. G. Rumiya who wrote that: **"Coverage of events was not always objective, it painted an overly favorable picture of the aggression. The clearest evidence of this is found in the AFP dispatches from Nairobi. They were merely bulletins on the victory of the Rwandan Patriotic Front in its irresistible advance towards Kigali. Widely listened to by the Rwandan intelligentsia, even in the office, RFI which is relayed by other foreign stations is indirectly responsible for starting off the panic that triggered human rights violations in a good number of cases."**(J. G. Rumiya, in *"Les relations interethnique au Rwanda"*, p.221)

The international media were most often manipulated and the NGOs and other so-called humanitarian agencies were no exceptions to the rule. C. Braeckman who initially defended the RPF position noted on this issue that: **"The Patriotic Front has not only revealed itself to be an excellent strategist in terms of guerrilla warfare, but has also shown its capacity to seduce and manipulate the foreign public opinion. While it is obvious that all stages of its offensive in the North, followed by its conquest of the country, have been accompanied, just like in all wars, despite the strict discipline imposed by General Kagame, by brutalities against the civilian population, it has always succeeded in hiding or in minimizing them. Hence for example, when the investigators representing four human rights defence organizations went to Rwanda, they spent days on end gathering information on the acts of violence committed by the Government side, but only spent a few hours in the RPF-controlled areas, without ever having**

**demanded (or been allowed) to talk to ordinary citizens without witnesses being present."** (C. Braeckman, p. 287). The conclusions of such missions were never challenged, no one ever denounced the fact that they were incomplete.

According to L. R. Melvern, Ndiaye's report quotes reliable sources on the execution in 1993 of eight local authorities who were members of MRND. However, Ndiaye adds that due to the inaccessibility of the area where the events took place, i.e areas controlled by RPF at the time, he was unable to obtain precise information on matter. The report was adopted nonetheless, despite this shortcoming. Missions fielded by NMOG and UNOMUR, and partially by UNAMIR failed for the same reasons: they could not or would not disclose the crimes committed by RPF, which always gave the impression of partiality.

This attitude is also found among the experts of certain agencies said to be working for the defence of human rights. I shall take the example from the report of A. Des Forges which, as cited by J. Carrero, is most surprising, but typical of all reports that had been written on the events of April 1994. As presented, it seems to me to be pure dishonesty. The author acknowledges, according to J. Carrero, not to have had information on crimes committed by RPF against the civilian population (page 692) of the English version). She then agrees with the official line that there was a single genocide, committed by the Hutu against the Tutsi, and concludes that the crime committed by RPF (which she overlooks, or the scope of which she is unaware) would not be part of her investigation. That seems utterly surprising and strange to me. How can one conclude that crimes do not constitute genocide if they are not known and if no willingness is shown to find out about them? On what scale do massacres become a genocide? In fact, to me, these types of reports seem fabricated by RPF agents, drafted upon their dictates or gathered from witnesses carefully selected by RPF. One sees this same trend in certain writings. Thus L.R.

Melvorn prepares maps of the genocide sites, one sees that they in fact represent the zone south of the so-called demilitarized area. In other words, the areas under Government control. There are no sites north of the line of demarcation. And so the question could be asked who killed over half a million people north of this line after 6 April ?

These are the conditions under which the events of 1994 were reported on. Not being able, as claimed, to go to the field, where the action took place, the big media groups contented themselves with pictures from CNN or those from other agencies gleaned in Kigali. They could move about freely on the Government side where the authorities were overwhelmed and could not know in advance what was going to happen. But RPF did not want to take such risk in the areas under its control, because it knew what its soldiers were occupying. It forbade and controlled access to that area.

The deaths of Presidents Habyarimana and Ntaryamira have often been postulated as the trigger for the events of 1994. Thus anyone wanting to understand the cause of the events should have looked for the assassin. I have never seen an issue on which the media and the international agencies have been so evasive, this being a sign of indifference, embarrassment or fear to uncover the truth. Because if the culprit was known, everything would change, all these lies and scheming by the Western powers and the real stakes, originating outside Rwanda, in a conflict of which the internal aggression only served as a springboard, would be revealed.

The contention that Habyarimana was assassinated by Hutu extremists has never convinced anyone; no evidence and, above all, no solid motivation. This is why I must applaud the courage of the Canadian Newspaper The National Post which exposed the existence of the report by Mr. Hourigan that was embargoed by the United Nations because it directly implicates P. Kagame in the deaths of Habyarimana and Ntaryamira and even gives names of members

of the commando that participated in the attack (J. Carrero, pp. 62 and 64). This information is corroborated by the testimony of C. Hakizabera and by the recent works "*Les secrets de génocide rwandais. Enquête sur les mystères d'un président*" by C. Onana in collaboration with D. Mushayidi, C. Kakizabera and D. Mushayidi, former members of RPF. And it seems that it was not just RPF that was behind this death that sparked off the events of April 1994, but also a major power, the United States, or Belgium (J. Carrero, p. 64), if not both of them. And this does not seem impossible, because Belgium has just apologized for its role in the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, 40 years on, when such apology could have no effect whatsoever.

It could, therefore, be hoped that through the perseverance of journalists desirous of telling the truth, those responsible for the deaths of Habyarimana and Ntaryamira will be uncovered and brought to justice much more quickly to ensure that justice is served for the people of Rwanda as a whole or what remains of it. This is because it is the Rwandan people as a whole, Tutsi, Hutu and Twa, that have been scarred by the manipulators of events.

### 13. The responsibility of the international community

#### (1) The United Nations and the Security Council

The international community's responsibilities in the Rwandan tragedy can be traced back to the beginning of the conflict, when it failed to respect international laws prohibiting any state, on whatever grounds, to assist, train, or finance forces which seek to destabilize another government. Yet, that is what the Ugandan government did, and President Museveni acknowledged this on several occasions in the speeches he made at the time. For example, on 10 October 1990 he said: "*I doubt very much that the troops that are there can defeat the rebel force by force. Some of them are our best people.*" He did not say "were", but rather "are our best people". He also acknowledged this in the

March/April 1999 (38) edition of **East African Alternatives**. Moreover, the aggressors, although of Rwandan origin, were essentially soldiers from the Ugandan army, who were therefore Ugandan citizens. There were also Ugandan soldiers of other origins as well.

The Security Council's management of the conflict, in early 1994 and even after, was characterized by a certain hypocrisy, widespread complicity and bias which made the victim the executioner. I should point out that during this period Saddam Hussein's Iraq invaded Kuwait. With the United States in the lead, the international community reacted, with more than just hypocritical verbal condemnations, pushing the Iraqi troops out of Kuwait. Rwandans had the feeling that international law could do nothing for their country's problems, as the international community let the issue fester until the tragic events of 1994. Was Kuwait rescued because it has oil, and was Rwanda abandoned because it is impoverished? The international community's attitude was the same as that of Westerners when they arrived in Rwanda. The way the problem was being dealt with gave the impression that there was no justice for the Hutu, and that the United Nations and the Security Council was handing the country over to the Tutsi lords.

## (2) UNAMIR

UNAMIR, with its Belgian contingent and its commander, heightened, rather than eased, the tensions in Rwanda in the following ways:

- by harassing Rwandans who were not sympathetic to the RPF cause (people who wore buttons bearing the Head of State's picture were attacked; ordinary citizens were attacked by these Belgians, including J.B. Baryagwiza, leader of the CDR, who was attacked at his home. The situation was so tense that at one point some of the Belgian Blue Helmets had to be immediately repatriated)

- by supporting the RPF as it violated the Arusha Accords by helping to infiltrate men and weapons, whilst FAR soldiers were harassed, disarmed and confined to their camps in Kigali;
- by actively supporting and assisting the RPF after 6 April 1994 (lending them uniforms and war supplies, fighting alongside them, etc.);
- by being unable or unwilling to secure the areas assigned to it.

Mr. Dallaire particularly aggravated the situation by expressing his favouritism for the RPF and the FDC (*Democratic Forces for Change*). That is why he only transmitted information to New York that was favourable to the RPF and incriminating for the opposing party, information of dubious reliability, garnered from his friends.

To illustrate this I would give you the example of a witness who spoke of the preparation of the genocide and of weapons caches in Kigali, a so-called high authority in the MRND and *Interahamwe* instructor, with the assumed name of Jean-Pierre Turatsinze, who Twagiramungu allegedly introduced to Dallaire. How can one not see that he prompted to give such information? Dallaire himself even had his doubts (Melvern, L.R. p. 93), and this pussyfooting proves more than anything that this witness is not credible.

Another equally unreasonable example was the infamous anonymous letter purportedly written by a group of high-ranking FAR officers to Dallaire on 3 December 1993 which gave the details of the plans and preparations for the genocide. The first question that comes to mind is how self-respecting organisations such as the United Nations and the Security Council, which is made up of powers as prestigious as the United States and Great Britain, can lend credence to a leaflet. And then they decide the fate of an entire people on the basis of a leaflet. The information was so serious that any person supplying

it would not have hesitated to sign the document, and run for cover if he felt threatened. Twagiramungu and Gatabazi were cited among the first victims. Was Habyarimana on the list? Was Gatabazi's murder a factor that triggered the genocide? Why did UNAMIR, which knew of the plan, not find out who murdered him? Why didn't the genocide take place right after Gatabazi's death, or even more so, after Bucyana's? Isn't it because this information was false or just a simple fabrication?

However, one could ask whether or not Dallaire ever transmitted information from the government and the FAR to the Security Council about a possible RPF attack, which was nothing more than an open secret from the time the RPF showed it had political weaknesses from the inside. Did he transmit this information to the Security Council about a looming RPF attack, which Major General D. Nsabimana, FAR Chief of General Staff, gave Colonel Marshall [sic] two days before the attack on 6 April?

Finally, Dallaire's bias and responsibility become evident when one reads the following statement he made: *"If I am replaced, I would ask my successor to help these young RPF combatants, so kind and disciplined, different from the brutish and arrogant government forces"* (Nshimiyimana, V., p. 66). Dallaire, in using men and equipment, helped them himself (Gasana, J.; Nyetera, A.T.), since he was not replaced before the April 1994 events. By helping instead of stopping the RPF to violate the Arusha Accords, Dallaire helped to heighten and not ease the tensions, at a time when everyone could clearly see that the country had reached the maximum danger zone of an ethnic explosion. He violated the Accords that he was supposed to help enforce.

Inter-ethnic relations were quite good in Rwanda in 1990. People had put the pre-1959 ethnic discrimination behind them as they looked towards a future where any ethnic references would become a thing of the past. The conflict that broke out on 1 October 1990 in the name of ideas drawn from feudo-colonial



times rekindled the mistrust, doubts, suspicions and tensions, from the point the aggressors declared they were fighting in the name of the Tutsi, one of the ethnic groups. In 1994, Rwanda was a country ravaged by more than three years of a war in which the Rwandan government was fighting the RPF and Uganda without having any way of having it acknowledged. That is why the Arusha Accords, instead of restoring peace, spurred the events and uncovered the true nature of this conflict: a counter-revolution of UNAR's ideological descendants who put no trust in the elections called for in the Arusha Peace Accords.

### **III. THE MULTI-PARTY STATE IN RWANDA**

One could sense the arrival of a multi-party state with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, but it took the constitutional amendment of 10 June 1991, a date right in the middle of the war, to authorize the multi-party system in Rwanda. However, the spontaneous birth of political parties leads one to think that the politicians already had this in mind for quite some time. Indeed, as early as July of the same year, parties such as the MRND, MDR, PSD, PL and PDC were recognized. The CDR would later be created, as would other, less important parties such as the PADER, PDI, PECO etc.

When one compares the platforms and manifestos of the five parties which played an active role in political life, the following observations can be made:

- The MRND, MDR and PSD acknowledged the 1959 revolution and its benefits, albeit to a lesser degree with the PSD, which seemed to align itself with J. Gitera's APROSOMA;
- The MDR explicitly refers to Grégoire Kayibanda;
- The MRND includes what it calls the moral revolution of 5 July 1973;
- The PL subscribes to neither the 1959 social revolution nor its benefits;
- The PDC makes reference to the 1959 revolution and to its benefits but underscores Christian values of love and justice;

All of these parties planned to extend their activities to the grassroots level, to the *cellules*, and in their statutes provide for organization at all levels.

The PL was a party made up of businessmen and those who support economic liberalism. It has often been perceived as a Tutsi party, on the one hand because it manifestly included more Tutsis than the others, on the other because it did not acknowledge the 1959 revolution.

The CDR was created with strong and hard claims to the 1959 revolution, criticizing the MRND for being too soft with the RPF and the MDR, and for betraying the revolution. The CDR laid the problem down in direct terms but was not, in my opinion, a racist party, because it did not advocate the elimination of the Tutsi, but condemned some Tutsis' open intentions to monopolize power by force of arms.

The MRND and the MDR were both republican and democratic parties, presenting themselves as the heirs of the MDR PARMEHUTU. However, as we would see later, infighting among their leaders and the tensions which characterized their relationships would have tragic consequences for the fate of the country.

As it happened, these two parties which espoused the MDR PARMEHUTU were not able to agree to create one single democratic-republican party. The situation could be explained in these terms. President J. Habyarimana, as we know, deposed President G. Kayibanda in 1973. This angered the legalists, who condemned any coup d'état as a matter of principle, as well as those from G. Kayibanda's region. Worse still, the circumstances surrounding President G. Kayibanda's death are unclear, and this appalled a portion of the Rwandan population, whatever his faults or mistakes may have been. Finally, many people, including many from Gitarama, were unhappy because some dignitaries

of Kayibanda's regime died in prison, even if those presumed guilty were tried later on.

At the time the political parties were being created in 1991, emerging leaders included F. Twagiramungu and E. Gapyisi, both sons-in-law of G. Kayibanda, and D. Nsengiyaremye, from Gitarama. It therefore seems that all these people just listed above would not permit cohabitation between J. Habyarimana and Kayibanda's sons-in-law, and the two trends resulted in the creation of different political parties.

And that was not all. As J. Gasana observes: *"For one of the opposition political parties, the MDR, the objective of the struggle to occupy the capital focuses on the Ukubohoza and the liberation of MRND activists in order to recover its political resources. This Ukubohoza is seen as a technique to destabilise and challenge the authorities and MRND members, and to confiscate their property..."*

*The MDR thus created the JDR or Inkuba (thunder), whose immediate goal is to annihilate the MRND. Inkuba groups pressure MRND members, neighbourhood by neighbourhood, in Kigali and the surrounding areas"* (Gasana, J., p. 3).

The MDR's priority was therefore to eliminate Habyarimana and the MRND, and with a view to this, he created the "Inkuba" youth, which later became known as the "Interahamwe". The MDR allied itself with F. Gatabazi's PSD party and former Habyarimana minister and businessman J. Mugenzi's PL party. They formed what they would call the FDC, or Democratic Forces for Change. The PDC party, careful, kept its distance.

Pluralism therefore made the war more complicated, since all the forces uniting against the RPF were divided. Habyarimana had to fight on two fronts: the

military one, against an unrelenting RPF in spite of its difficulties, and the internal political one against the FDC.

On 16 April 1992, a truly pluralistic (coalition) government was created. It included ministers from the MRND, MDR, PSD, PL, and PDC, and was headed by the MDR's Dr. D. Nsengiyaremye. Most of the opposition politicians no longer viewed the war as a priority. The priority was to occupy as much Rwandan political space as possible.

In June 1992, the FDC met the RPF in Brussels and forged an alliance against Habyarimana and in favour of the RPF-led war. This strategic and not ideological alliance made part of the population feel awkward, or as if it had been betrayed. It was difficult to understand how members of a government could sign an agreement with someone who was fighting that same government, under the pretext of wanting to isolate one component of that government. This mistake made by the FDC had serious consequences. To please the RPF, the MDR and the PSD disowned their republican ideology and focused their political debates on personal quarrels. When they realized their mistake, it was too late, as we will see. They went out on a limb that they had sawed too much, which would fall as soon as they tried to hang on.

The Nsengiyaremye government began peace negotiations with the RPF in Arusha, but given the tensions that existed between the MRND and the FDC, the governmental delegation always had problems defending a coherent position, which had damaging effects on the results of these negotiations.

The February 1993 attack put the RPF-FDC alliance to the test, since some FDC members began questioning the RPF's sincerity in the search for peace. This was particularly true in the regions close to the combat zones, but also in Kigali. It was during this period that some began to distance themselves from the RPF. They included Gapyisi, Mbonampeka and all these intellectuals/politicians who

hovered around the "Forum Paix et Démocratie" journal and circle, led by Gapyisi among others, who were coming back to true public debates and republican ideals. The birth of the "Forum Paix et Démocratie" phenomenon was the manifestation of a reality that the FDC politicians had forgotten: political pluralism worked, but the RPF continued to apply pressure. The war was still there, and the RPF continued to dangerously gain ground. Gapyisi probably lost his life because he said and understood this.

Twagiramungu, who controlled a minority wing within his party, was chased out of the MDR steering committee by the Kabusunzu congress, for various reasons, but his rivalry with Nsengiyaremye, as well as a difference in beliefs between himself and most of the party leadership could explain everything. The disagreements would affect the other two parties, mostly the PL.

The Arusha negotiations finally unveiled the nature of Rwandan political pluralism, because as soon as the Accords were signed, there were disagreements within the member parties of the FDC over who would be included in the transitional institutions. The situation was all the more complicated as the FDC split into pro and anti-RPF factions. The MDR example speaks for itself. Looking at the facts, Twagiramungu was no longer party chairman, but legally he still was, since the Minister of Justice and Courts had not yet made a ruling. As for these parties' problems, therefore, there is more of a legal argument to take into consideration, and not just simple manipulating on the part of Habyarimana, as some often say, to show that he was an obstacle to peace.

Looking at the facts, some political parties served as a Trojan Horse for the RPF, if we look at C. Hakizabera's statements, which cite even the names of some of their agents within these parties. And yet, a journalist who purportedly wrote this at that time was supposedly accused of being an extremist and anti-Tutsi.

With Mr. Ndadaye's assassination, Rwandan political pluralism was completely dead. We could see, *mutatis mutandis*, a situation comparable to that of 1959, in other words, politico-ethnic bipolarisation, with of course some Hutus in the Tutsi-RPF pole, and some Tutsis in the Hutu pole gathered around President Habyarimana. The major difference was that this time there were many external players in the conflict who supported, politically and militarily, the RPF pole, and who had tied their hands to the Habyarimana pole. What followed up until April 1994 were simply gesticulations and a poker game. One could realize all this just after the Arusha Accords were signed, because the parties that had monopolized the negotiations were not celebrating, as they indeed realized they had been swindled.

Overall, it can be said that the democratic experience on which so many had pinned their hopes was a failure, because one of the parties to the conflict, which yearned for power at all costs, did not believe in the experience and felt defeated from the beginning, as we shall see in the next chapter.

#### **IV. THE ARMED CONFLICT, ITS IMPACT ON AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE EVENTS OF 1994**

##### **1. What is meant by the events of 1994?**

The "events of 1994" can be understood in two ways, depending on whether one relies on the so-called official version imposed by the RPF and adopted by the international community for political reasons, or the version that tallies more with the facts.

### (1) The official version

According to the official version, the facts are straightforward: Habyarimana's regime and its Interahamwe and Hutu extremists had for a long time been planning a genocide of the Tutsis and moderate Hutus belonging to the internal opposition. The Tutsi genocide started when President Habyarimana's plane crashed on 6 April 1994,. Thus, there are the *génocidaires* and executioners or the Hutus on the one hand, and on the other, the victims, i.e. the Tutsis and their allies.

### (2) The Reality

First of all, it must be noted that the plane did not crash by accident, and that many witnesses talked about an attack. Secondly, that the attack did not take place in a country where the situation was normal and peaceful, but in a country which was grappling with an armed conflict in which Habyarimana was one of the main protagonists. Another Hutu President, Ntaryamira of Burundi, also died in the attack, barely six months after the assassination of another Burundian Hutu President, M. Ndadaye, who was killed by a part of the Tutsi army which dominated the political affairs of that country. The Rwandan Head of State died at the height of tension, as noted by D. Wallen of the Charity Oxform NGO: *"Rwandan society was now more violently divided against itself than at any time since independence. The war had done incalculable damage to the economy and environment and the country stood on the brink of uncharted abyss of anarchy and violence. There were too many historical, ethnic, economic and political pressures that were likely to push it over the edge"* (Melvern, L.R., p88). This was the consequence of a conflict that started before 1990 with a cleverly orchestrated media campaign. The campaign was so successful that, in the twinkling of an eye, people forgot that the World Bank commended Rwanda in 1989, as did Amnesty International in 1990 regarding



the human rights situation in Rwanda , and that the Canadian universities awarded a *honoris causa* doctorate to President Habyarimana in 1992.

The armed conflict:

a) Caused the disintegration of the country's administrative, political and social structures;

b) ~~Seriously destabilised the cohesion of the FAR, particularly through politicisation;~~

c) Completely paralysed and ruined the economy (economic stagnation, death of tourism, no more exports, heavy defence budge, high expenditure to assist the over one million people displaced by the war, deficit in production following the displacement of the population from the Byumba and Ruhengeri food- producing regions);

d) Led to generalised insecurity;

e) Dealt a fatal blow to national unity and cohesion by setting up groups against each other, sometimes at the ethnic level and sometimes at the regional or political level. The RPF played the ethnic card unreservedly, in an effort to move the Tutsis who had joined the MRND away from the party and thus prove that the MRND was only a Hutu party, and, above all, to create ethnic tensions in order to prove to the world that the Tutsis were in danger, thus giving it reasons to impose its so-called emergency intervention.

f) Caused collective hysteria and widespread fear - fear of the omnipresent infiltrator and invisible enemy, as highlighted by L.R. Melvern when she writes "In the hills of Rwanda there was constant surveillance by neighbours" (Melvern, p64). This was merely a consequence of the war because

up until then, people did not seem to note each other's presence in one of the most densely-populated countries in the world.

In my view, the current tension in the world would be a good starting point in trying to understand the Rwandan people's sufferings, frustrations and frame of mind before 6 April 1994. On 11 September 2001, a terrorist attack claimed the lives of about 5,000 people in the United States, mainly in New York. The Americans and the world at large were shocked by the attack, not only because of the number of casualties, but also because of the cowardly way in which those people were murdered and the images of horror that kept appearing on television channels. The shock was such that anyone from the Middle East became a suspect, especially if they wore a long beard, a least in certain circles. The attack led to the war against Afghanistan and there are fears of another war against Iraq.

According to statistics provided by J. Gasana, 40,000 Hutus died in one week in February 1993, following massacres committed by the RPF. That was eight times the number of victims from the 11 September attack. The massacres took place far from the CNN cameras, but the Rwandan people lived through it all. Their shock was eight times that of 11 September! They had already received a shock four times greater! What about the shock of having 1,000,000 displaced persons living in inhuman conditions? And I talk from experience. I was part of a team which undertook the initiative to seek assistance for the displaced persons and that was how I was able to visit the Nkumba and Cyeru camps in the Ruhengeri *préfecture*, and the Miyove and Ngarama camps in the Byumba *préfecture*. I travelled to the Nyacyonga and Mugambazi camps in March 1993, in search of my family. Words cannot describe what I saw. How could the Rwandan people react *vis à vis* the RPF, the cause of this misery and distress, and which wanted to cause even more misery and distress? How could the RPF not keep up its offensive given the inertia and indifference of the international community *vis à vis* this situation?

The gulf had widened because the conflict had had effects that the RPF had not expected or had played down, such as the people resistance of the people, the unexpected resistance of the FAR, the rejection of the Arusha Accords, the assassination of Ndadaye and the misalliance of the FDC.

With the death of President Habyarimana and General D. Nsabimana, the FAR chief of staff, the Rwanda State and army were decapitated. As a result, the RPF was the only coherent force that was in a position to initiate any action, the only strike force that was intact and renewed, since no embargo had been imposed against it. It dominated the media and the diplomatic scene. On the government side, every body was overwhelmed or overtaken by the events, in spite of their goodwill. The RPF which had announced the Tutsi genocide in advance shouted "fire" and hurried to put it off.

On their way into Byumba and Ruhengeri, the RPF massacred tens of thousands of unarmed civilians without the international community lifting a finger. When the Tutsis were dying during the disturbances, international commissions of enquiry were set up, on orders from the RPF or NGOs which supported the RPF, whereas none of them made the slightest effort to investigate the massacres of Hutu civilians, since the latter did not profess to be members of the opposition. The RPF was thus reassured that it had nothing to fear from the international community, however guilty it might have been.

With the complicity of NGOs and friendly western powers, the RPF therefore used the same technique as it had used before to impose on the world the idea of a genocide against the Tutsis by Hutu extremists from the Habyarimana regime. I shall not attempt to refute the idea that the genocide was prepared, which A.T. Nyetera has done brilliantly. Rather, I wish to draw attention to something that neither the media - especially those which support the RPF - nor the so called humanitarian agencies, have ever wanted or been able to say, either out of

interest, ignorance or cowardice or because of complicity. I am referring to the scale of the massacres and atrocities committed by the RPF before and after the 1994 events, and for which the Interahamwe were had responsible whenever possible. The RPF did not hesitate to massacre Tutsis, as shown by Mr. Gérin's testimony in the Kibungo region: "[All this time, we saw the RPF commit unspeakable massacres... They blindly killed all those whom they came across - men, women, children, Tutsis or Hutus, it did not matter. There were bodies strewn on the road were using and the wounded were finished off with machetes or hoes. The stench and the spectacle were unbearable]!" It was generally thought that only the Interahamwes were capable of such a deed! And yet, can one imagine Tutsis killing themselves as the RPF approached? Well, the Gérins saw some! Mr Gérin provides important testimony on how massacres committed by the RPF were filmed and then blamed on the Interahamwe: "...Between the 31<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> April, I saw with my own eyes a C-130 plane hedgehopping over the whole Rusumo-Kibungo zone. It seemed to be photographing or filming the region and was not bothered at all by the RPF army. It was therefore working in connivance with the army, preparing documents on those armed bands who could not be identified from the air. It is therefore possible that actions by the RPF and their way of operating were attributed to the Interahamwes" (Africa International, p25). Passing through the region at the same time, H. Wende too was surprised to see fresh bodies in an RPF occupied zone He wondered how such massacres could be attributed to the Interahamwes.

By focusing attention on Kigali where an unusual event (namely, the simultaneous deaths of two presidents), had just taken place, the RPF diverted everyone's attention from what was happening inland. This is because it went on to launch a generalised attack for the final victory, an attack which had been planned for a long time as L.R. Melvern notes: "*The RPF offensive had begun along an 80 kilometres demilitarised zone in three main axes, putting into place a plan long in preparation. Its aim was to defeat an army three times its*

*size and with a superior weaponry". (Melvern, L.R., p154). It is quite possible that the assassination of President Habyarimana was part of the plan, as asserted by C. Hakizabera. On the other hand, Melvern was not equipped well enough to determine the capacity of the RPF troops, since nobody ever had access to its military potential and, above all, the RPF had continuously armed itself, via Uganda.*

In Kigali, as stated by Nyetera, *"The RPF soldiers are leaving the barracks. They are all over Kigali and the outskirts. The big war has resumed. The presidential guard is leaving its camp. There were gunshot throughout the night"* (p23). It was during that sortie that the RPF massacred civilians around the CND where it was based and also massacred other people in Kacyiru and Remera. Some of them were well known and their names have been mentioned, while others were less known and their names have never been mentioned.

Outside Kigali, there were massacres wherever the RPF went. But who saw those murdered civilians there in the Ruhengeri or Byumba mountains and in the Kibungo banana plantations, where journalists did not go for security reasons? One should not forget that journalists went to RPF-controlled zones only under RPF military escort, whereas in the so-called government zone, one could move about freely. Thus, they reported or filmed only what the RPF deigned to show them. Moreover, the RPF could never take them to places where they ran the risk of meeting RPF's own victims. In such cases, interviews were conducted in the presence of RPF soldiers and it was impossible for the witnesses to actually say what they had seen or experienced.

A typical example was the visit by the South African journalist, H. Wende, among others. In the RPF region, they only visited a group of survivors in Byumba itself, Kigali and a missionary station in Kibungo, where the RPF wanted to show them thousands of victims of massacres attributed to the Interahamwe. However, that was the same region where Mr Gérin and his wife

had witnessed the massacres of civilians by the RPF. The problem is, which victims did the RPF show them?

In the government zone, they managed the best they could to travel from the border with Burundi to Butare. They did not have any escort and their visit had not been announced, which makes their testimony more authentic: roadblocks but no bodies; frightened people, some of whom had already lost their families; and authorities doing their level best to ensure the security of those who needed it. The journalists mentioned Préfet S. Nsabimana's efforts to protect the Tutsis who had been given shelter at the *préfecture* office and, above all, the fact that the day after their arrival, he personally escorted abandoned children and orphans who had been given shelter in Karubanda and who the Red Cross wanted to transfer to Burundi as the fighting was getting closer and closer to the town. The following day, he was sacked. He was not the only official who tried to maintain calm in their regions. The Gérins also mention the efforts of a *Bourgmestre* who tried to restrain what they refer to as the "Interahamwe" in the Kibungo region.

Wende and his friends did not find anybody to tell them that just some minutes from the place where they had visited the Byumba survivors, the RPF had massacred 3,000 civilians at the stadium, and 1,500 others at the Byumba cathedral in the opposite direction; that priests and other persons (including Father J. Hitimana, rector of the Rwesero seminary, Father A. Nkundabanyanga, chief bursar of the Byumba diocese, Father G. Mudashimwa, an old and very sick man, etc.) had been massacred in Nyinawimana and Rwesero, on their way to Kigali; that civilians had been massacred in Kinyami, Rutare, Muhura, Kiziguro, Gishali, etc. S. Musangamfura, a journalist with the *Isibo* newspaper who was evacuated to Byumba by the RPF in April 1994, referred to the massacres in the following terms: *"Since my evacuation to Byumba in April 1994, I am beginning to receive information and irrefutable evidence concerning ethnic massacres committed by members of the Rwandese*

*Patriotic Front, RPF officers, political and administrative officers and survivors of genocide.* It is obviously surprising that the information in question was available only during that period, as if it was the first time that the RPF was committing such massacres. However, when one realises that Musangamfura was the voice of Twagiramungu and the FDC (a pro-RPF wing), it becomes clear that the massacres committed by the RPF before then were part of what they referred to as "*ikinamico rya Habyarimana*" (Habyarimana's orchestration).

To have an idea of the situation, one can refer to the report by SOS Rwanda-Burundi entitled "LIST OF RPF-INKONTANYI/RPA SUSPECTED OF PREMEDITATING AND COMMITTING CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, WHICH COME UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR RWANDA (ICTR)", which gives examples of the massacres of civilians by the RPF and denounces RPF personalities who were involved. I shall not cite their names, but only the places where the crimes were committed, just for the period up to July-August. I wish to point out here that the said report is not exhaustive and that I shall cite only a few cases.

- p11: X, Muhazi/Kibungo commune: 18 people;
- p12: X, Rusumo/Kibungo commune: 1,500 people;
- p12: X, Rukara/Kibungo commune: more than 900 people and Kigali: "cleansing" around the CND;
- p13: X, Murambi/Byumba commune: 2426 people (mass grave at Kiziguro);
- p17: RPF, "The ground everywhere is strewn with hundreds of thousands of bodies waiting to be buried by Ugandan bulldozers" (RFI: Radio France International, 12 May 1994).
- p17: RPF, "At least 200,000 people have been killed in six weeks. The HCR is talking about refugees being deliberately shot at as they try to leave the country, villagers gathered together in schools and cut into pieces with machetes and



people thrown alive into the Akagera river with their feet and wrists tied together" (Collette Breackman, *Le Soir* of 19 May 1994);

-p17: RPF, 17,000 victims as the army advanced towards the Rusumo border;

-p18: RPF, out of the 12,000 refugees herded together in front of the Ecole Saint-André after the fall of Kigali, ICRR found only 113 prisoners of war on 14 July 1994. What happened to the rest?

-p18: RPF, hundreds, if not thousands of unarmed civilians and RPF opponents summarily executed in the North East of the country (Amnesty International);

~~-p18: Reference to Musangamfura who talks of 312,726 people massacred "selectively and deliberately";~~

-p18: Reference to F. Twagiramungu who talks of irrefutable evidence concerning the massacre of 200,000 people;

-p18: J. Gasana and Nsengimana mention the ethnic cleansing of Mutara in order to create a Tutsi space;

-p19 RPF, Gabiro camp, Mutara, Stephen Smith witnessed organised massacres. He counted more than 1,000 bodies in five days;

-p20: The Gersonny Report mentions the death of more than 30,000 people;

-p23: X, Kabare, Buringa/Gitarama commune, 120 people;

-p25: X, ordered the massacre of the people...hundreds of thousands;

-p32: X, Kigoma/Gitarama commune, hundreds of victims;

-p32: X, Mukingi/Gitarama commune, hundreds of victims;

-p33: X, Kigali, the D. Rwananiye and J. Hategekimana families;

~~-p34: X, Byumba, especially the Kinihira region, massacres of many civilians;~~

-p34: X, Kabyagi/Gitarama, murder of three bishops, several priests and nuns and many lay people;

-p41: X, Kabuga/Kigali, ordered the massacre of Hutu civilians in Bicumbi, Gikoro, Rubungo, Gikomero and Kanombe;

-p42: X and Y, Byumba, massacred 1500 Hutu farmers who had taken refuge in the buildings of the Byumba diocese;

-p44: X, Kibungo, organisation of "massive elimination of Hutu peasant farmers in order to provide Tutsi peasant farmers with land and housing";

-p45: X, ethnic divide in Mutara after "clearing the region of its Hutu elements";  
-p45: X, Kigali, implicated in the murder of President Habyarimana, which triggered the events of 1994.

As can be seen from this very partial report, there is no dearth of evidence of deliberate and selective massacres of Hutu civilians. What is lacking is the will to acknowledge them and to conduct investigations in order to draw more attention to them - for it is taken for granted that that the RPF did not commit any massacres. Those which are only too obvious are downplayed or ignored.

The attack of 6 April actually left a clear field for the RPF, by creating an ideal situation for it. Through the war, the RPF could regain what it had lost since the preceding events. In fact, the RPF had never believed in a negotiated solution as its vice-president P. Mazimpaka stated later on (Melvern, L; R. pp29 and 54). Likewise, Kagame's sole objective has always been take over power, by fair means or foul. P. Dijou describes RPF's strategy in the following terms: "*The crux of the matter is that Major Kagame's sole objective had always been total victory. He negotiated from time to time. He signed accords but, quite objectively, he never had any other aim but to win, through peaceful means or war*" (Investigation into the Rwandan Tragedy, p210). Now, as mentioned earlier on, the conflict in Rwanda had given rise to radicalism in the social and political spheres and the RPF had not been able to broaden its internal political base. Worse still, the majority of his allies had just left him and joined the pro-Habyarimana side. The transition could have been impossible for the RPF as a result.

The RPF leaders' frame of mind can be compared with that of President Habyarimana who, despite fears that the RPF might resort to the use of force, stated: "*[you should help me to calm down the extremist Hutus and Tutsis so that I can wait for the general elections to be held in two years. I shall easily*

*win the elections since the Hutus make up 80% of the voters]"* (reported by B. Debré, *Enquête sur le tragédie rwandaise*, p211).

As soon as the news of the attack broke out, the RPF did not appeal for calm. It issued more and more threats and ultimatums, just to distract people's attention, while its troops launched an offensive and did a forced march towards Kigali. Once again, it is interesting to compare the frame of mind of the leaders on both sides: RPF's aggressive attitude contrasted with the government's (FAR, political parties, population) fear, disarray and confusion.

a) Colonel T. Bagosora, *Directeur de cabinet* of the Defence Minister, broadcast a communiqué appealing for calm and asking the people to reject hatred and violence. He also appealed to the youth to refrain from acts of vandalism and stressed the need to accelerate the setting up of transitional institutions.

b) On several occasions, the interim government proposed cease-fires, which the RPF always rejected.

c) The FAR high command offered its collaboration to stop the massacres, which was rejected by General Dallaire.

d) Melvern (Melvern, L.R., p129) notes that Dallaire refused the RPF's offer to collaborate with the government in order to stop the massacres because he doubted about its sincerity and because both sides were killing non-combatants. That is not surprising in the case of the FAR, coming from Dallaire. What is surprising, however, is his admission that the RPF was killing non-combatants and his failure to learn lessons from this incident.

e) On the other hand, Kagame rejected General Dallaire's proposal to strengthen UNAMIR in order to secure a cease-fire.

f) Kagame threatened UNAMIR troops, saying that he would treat them like enemies if they tried to intervene between his own troops and the government troops.

The subsequent events are well known (UNAMIR's withdrawal; the Security Council's hesitations and withdrawal and, according to some testimonies, the engagement of the Belgium UNAMIR contingency on UNAMIR's side (J. Gasana, A.T. Nyetera); and the all-out war that spared nobody. General Dallaire supported the RPF through and through. It is here that the implications of the conflict on the subsequent events of 1994 can be clearly seen. The RPF used the conflict to create an uncontrollable situation. It remove away all embarrassing witnesses and then achieved what it had been trying to do since 1990, i.e. complete victory and absolute power. It needed pretexts: to save the Tutsis who were being hunted down by Hutu extremists. However, one must not forget that the RPF had deployed "~~its agents throughout the country to create confusion and incite the people to violence~~". (F. Twagiramungu in *Enquête sur le tragédie rwandaise*, p210; see also Gasana, J.; p21; Nyetera, p8). This aspect has been hushed up and yet, it is highlighted with regard to Butare by H. Wende who reports the words of one of the people he talked to: "***The trouble begun when the Tutsi started hearing that the RPF was coming nearer, they started becoming arrogant and aggressive***". Another person added: "***It was after the agreement at Arusha that the Tutsis in the area became arrogant...They told us "We will come back to power again, you'll see"***" (Wende, H., p183).

The above example shows the work of the RPF infiltrators and the result of ethnic bipolarization. The people referred to above did not speak as members of political parties, but as members of an ethnic group. This kind of provocation did not take place only in Butare, since Nyetera also talks about it. It can be said that the RPF used such provocation to cause dissension and ethnic massacres,

thus sacrificing some Tutsis whom it later on presented as martyrs of a planned genocide. This is illustrated by, among other things, the fact that the disturbances stretched over time and space.

The said events are only an episode (the most tragic, it is true) of the conflict that has ravaged this country since 1990. They are a stage in RPF's march towards power, orchestrated with amazing perfection. As stressed by J. Gasana, the RPF had to make room for Tutsi refugees who had returned to the country, with their cattle, and also to resettle on the best land, its Tutsis supporters living in the country. The RPF also had to find spoils for its fighters. To do so, it created a situation whereby it could kill in order to recover the property of the deceased, or appropriate the property of those who had fled earlier. Referring to the figure of 400,000 cows brought into the country in 1994 according to data from the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Social Integration, J. Gasana concluded that the space required for the cows would have been equivalent to the space occupied by 2,000,000 inhabitants who depended on the land (Gasana, J., p24). This partly explains why such a small country lost millions of lives. It also explains why the Byumba and Kibungu *préfectures* which are basically pastoral, lost over half of their population, while Butare lost 40% and Kigali 29%, mainly because of the region (sic)<sup>1</sup> (Gasana, J., p23).

Having driven the people into a frenzy and set them against each other, the RPF neutralised the international force, made it work for it when possible, and, when that was not possible, forced it to withdraw, abandoning the Rwandan people to the mercy of the RPF. As a result, all kinds of criminals were able to settle scores with their enemies, to appropriate themselves other people's property, to eliminate whoever they did not like or whoever came in their way. As a way out of this difficult situation, the international community then decided as follows: let us leave them to kill each other, it will be easier afterwards to blame the massacres on the loser. That was how things happened and continue to happen.

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<sup>1</sup> Translator's note: the meaning of the sentence is not clear in the source text.  
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The RPF was able to lay the responsibility for the death of 500,000 to 1,000,000 people on those whom it labelled Hutu extremists or "Interahamwe", which the international community easily accepted. Yet, according to figures from Gasana (p24), Rwanda has since 1990, allegedly lost *at least*, 3,150,000 to be more exact, which is 40% of its population. Who is accountable for the death of the other victims, i.e., over 2,000,000 people? When people talk about survivors, they think about the Tutsis and "moderate" Hutus (therefore RPF members) who are in Rwanda. They never think about the other Hutus inside the country who lost their families as early as 1990, or the refugees who are wandering around the world and who survived only because they fled, seeing that some of them are already on the list of the people wanted by the RPF even before April 1994 or thereafter (see the , for example). Justice has not been rendered to those people. Their grievances are not taken into account and people pretend not to know that they are survivors of a genocide committed by the RPF since 1990.

## **V. DEMISTIFICATION OF THE KEY TERMS USED IN THE CONFLICT: Interahamwe, Inkotanyi, Inyenzi, Tutsi.**

During the conflict that tore Rwanda apart, certain terms resurfaced on the linguistic market, at times used wrongly to serve individual interests. The important thing is that the use of these terms is hardly neutral and using them to describe someone may have ramifications that go beyond simple identification.

### **1. Interahamwe**

"Interahamwe" is a term which, though known to everyone, was not commonly used. The word is made up of two roots, intera- and hamwe. Intera- comes from the verb "gutera", which may have several meanings: (a) to plant, (b) to throw, (c) to attack, (d) to appear, etc. Hamwe means (a) together, (b) same place, (c) in an identical manner, etc.

The compound word "Interahamwe" excludes (a), (b) and (c) and means "people of the same age group, who agree on a particular issue, who stand together, or who pursue the same objective. So it is out of ignorance or a desire to manipulate that some people translated "Interahamwe" as "people who attack together" to prove that the Interahamwe were a militia trained to fight, and that the mission to "attack" is inscribed in the term defining them.

On the political scene, it was apparently Mr. A. Gasana who brought up the idea of an MRND youth league, which another MRND member, D. Murenzi, operationalized of his own volition in late 1991. He then formed a group of youths called Interahamwe; their purpose was to brainstorm on a political opening required by their party to avoid being swept away by the increasingly aggressive MDR youth wing, the Ukubohoza. Their mission was to carry out propaganda for the MRND and make political entertainment. I would like to point out that the two men did not come from the North, they hailed from the same *commune* of Gikomero, in Kigali. So it was an open group, including, among others, R. Kajuga, a Tutsi, who became the main cheerleader and subsequently the national chairman. It was so open that it was infiltrated by RPF agents, if C. Hakizabara's statement was anything to go by.

Therefore, the Interahamwe did not have a military vocation and were not conceived as a militia. Nor did they constitute a response to the RPF invasion as pointed out by individuals like H. Wende, who wrote "*the Interahamwe were formed by the Habyarimana government allegedly as a response to the RPF invasion in 1990*" (H. Wende, p128). They were formed at the initiative of the MRND members and not of the party leadership to be players in the multiparty political race. Since the group did not have any legal status, they were functioning as individuals and did not have any organizational status anywhere close to that of the party at the national, prefectural, communal or sectoral level.



They had a national committee presided over by R. Kajuga, but it was just an initiative committee with no subsidiary organs.

At the local level, political entertainment, whenever there was one, was organized by individuals who did not receive any order from anyone and were only answerable to their local committee. In actual fact, their political entertainment consisted in songs and dance performed at political rallies and had a rather folkloric slant. Nothing in their activities smacked of a militia organization. It was only in Kigali there were clashes between the Interahamwe and the youth wings of opposing political parties, the PSD's *Abakombozi*, the PL's youth wings, the MDR's *Inkuba*. *Inkuba*, the first youth wing to be formed, was invited by the party Chairman Twagiramungu to "gukanda" (to crush, to smother) the Interahamwe.

At the ethnic level, the party, true to nature, was made up of Hutus and Tutsis alike. A. T. Nyetera, living in Kigali and familiar with the situation in Rwanda, stated that "the MRND, MDR, PSD and PL parties" were recruiting their youths among Hutus and Tutsis alike" (p8). Besides, the Interahamwe could not be anti-Tutsi and have a Tutsi as chairman of their initiative committee.

With regard to the manipulative use to which this term was put, it should be pointed out that it was part of the campaign to demonize the RPF's enemies. In order to discredit the MRND that had managed to resist the "ukubohozo" campaign, the RPF and the FDC claimed this party was using militias. In the final analysis, they applied this term to all the MRND members. When the MDR, PSD and PL broke up, their youth wings suffered the same fate. Automatically, the RPF and the relaying media applied the term Interahamwe to all the youth wings of rival parties. But it should be noted that there was never a common coordination, just like the pro-Habyarimana parties never had a coalition between them. During the April 1994 phase of the Rwandan conflict, the term "Interahamwe" became a hotchpotch in the RPF's terminology relayed

by the international community to generally describe the perpetrators of massacres in Rwanda at that time. But it also included not only its own victims, as pointed out, among others, by S. Musangamfura, but also acts of banditry, criminality, resistance and counter-offensive. Whoever rose against the RPF or its ravages was automatically considered an "Interahamwe". In actual fact, there has been a deformation of meaning because "Interahamwe" for some people and for propaganda purposes, has come to mean "a genocide perpetrator, a criminal", just like "hutu" in some quarters has become synonymous with "extremist". For instance, A. T. Nyetera stated in his testimony that most of the killers he saw were *Bakombozi* (p8). But we need to know whether they were acting in their personal capacity or on behalf of their party. But all people said was that the "Interahamwe" did all of that. However, how many people have testimonies like Nyetera's that do not reduce the 1994 events to a game between the wicked Interahamwe and the RPF "angels"!

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## 2. Inkotanyi

Inkotanyi comes from the verb "gukotana", meaning (a) to fight tooth and nail, (b) to act fiercely and relentlessly. The noun "Inkotanyi" therefore means (a) a fierce and relentless fighter, who stops at nothing, (b) a zealous and persevering person.

In the history of Rwanda, the term "Abakotanyi" referred to one of the militias in King Yuhi Gahindiro's army. King Rwabugiri was called "Inkotanyi" (the fighter par excellence) on account of his several military campaigns. The RPF used this name for its own army perhaps in reference to King Gahindiro's militia because it (RPF) liked to refer to the feudal past. Thus, it was called either RPF/RPA or RPF/Inkotanyi, and it was deduced that Inkotanyi was synonymous with RPA. Consequently, the word "Inkotanyi" with a capital I refers to the body as such while "inkotanyi" with a small initial refers to a member of the "Inkotanyi" army or RPA. This became a new usage, an

addition to the existing ones. It is a neologism. You cannot be an "inkotanyi" if you are not an RPF member and if you have not undergone any military training.

### **3. Inyenzi**

The term "Inyenzi" has its origin in the 1960s. People translate it as "cockroach" out of ignorance or mockery for, in actual fact, it was a rallying code name the aggressors had given themselves. It comes from "Ingangurarugo yiyemeje kuba ingenzi" (The Ingangurarugo whose ambition is to be one of the best). Ingangurarugo is a name given to one of King Rwabugiri's most dreadful militias towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. "Inyenzi" referred to troops trained by monarchists to fight the republican regime that emerged from the 1959 social revolution. This guerilla movement carried out several attacks between 1960 and 1967 from neighbouring countries, but it ended up running out of steam. Subsequently, the term was often applied to the RPF and its soldiers, because they were seen to be waging the same war as the Inyenzi's.

### **4. Tutsi**

The term Tutsi refers to one of the ethnic groups in Rwanda, alongside the Hutus and the Twas. As a term, it does not pose any problem of understanding. But it becomes interesting to see the manipulative use to which it is put like the previous terms.

### **5. Mystifying use of terms**

Terms that are particularly used to mystify are "Inyenzi", "umwanzi: enemy", "Inkotanyi" and "umututsi". As we have seen, these terms have different connotations. We have seen that the term "Inkotanyi" was used as a synonym of RPA (Rwandan Patriotic Army), and that "Inkotanyi" referred to an RPA

member. Meanwhile, the RPF/Inkotanyi was fighting the FAR. So they were enemies. Although the Inkotanyi initially comprised Tutsis from the Ugandan army together with soldiers recruited from other countries, there were also Hutus in the RPF and in its army. Among them were Colonel A. Kanyarengwe, the RPF Chairman after F. Rwigema's death, T. Lizinde, S. Biseruka, S. Sendashonga, J. Barahinyura, etc. People joined the RPF and its army by choice. No one was born RPA or Inkotanyi, people became so by the mere fact that they were Tutsis. There were Tutsis who joined other parties, who roundly condemned and fought the RPF, who were victims of the RPF and who fled from the RPF when it took power.

The *umwanzi* (enemy)-*Inyenzi*-Inkotanyi-Tutsi assimilation was invented by the RPF so that they could use it to accuse their detractors who denounced and fought them openly of genocide. Thus, anyone merely pronouncing the words "umwanzi", "Inyenzi" or "Inkotanyi" in a public or private meeting or using it in a written document may be accused of inciting people to hatred against the Tutsis. Similarly, whenever an anti-RPF person talks of "umwanzi" (enemy), the RPF and its supporters will say he/she is actually referring to the Tutsis.

This *umwanzi*-Inkotanyi-Tutsi assimilation becomes serious when it is used by the ICTR to indict the suspects. Thus, the Prosecution once told a witness that there was an official definition of the enemy, and that definition referred to the Tutsi. To buttress its point, the Prosecution used as an exhibit a document attributed to a department in the FAR Headquarters. The transmission letter to the OPS Sectors Commanders was signed by the Chief of Staff Colonel Nsabimana, BEM, and was dated 21 September 1992.

Defining the enemy, the document stated that: [**"The main enemy is a power-thirsty extremist Tutsi living inside or outside the country, who has NEVER acknowledged and has NOT yet acknowledged the realities of the 1959 social revolution, bent on re-conquering power by all means,**

including the use of arms”] (p2). In an attempt to identify the enemy, the authors noted that that: **[“the ENI (enemy) and his supporters are recruited mainly from the following social groups:**

1. **Tutsi refugees ... (the copy becomes illegible)**
2. **Tutsis inside the country**
3. **Hutus disgruntled with the regime in place**
4. **The unemployed inside and outside Rwanda**
5. **Foreigners married to Tutsi women**
6. **Nilo-hamitic populace in the region**
7. **Fugitive criminals”] (p2)**

Those are two passages used to prove that during the war, in Rwanda, there was an official definition of the enemy and under that definition, the Tutsi was referred to as the enemy. Is that the true picture? No.

1. The text was not an official or government document. It was an internal army document and was not yet approved by the superior authority.

2. With regard to the definition of the main enemy, it was not just any Tutsi or every Tutsi. The listed characteristics excluded all forms of generalization.

3. The document referred to groups people recruited, which extended beyond the Tutsi circles; it also referred to Hutus and even foreigners. And not all individuals from all these circles were considered as enemies. I am underscoring the words MAINLY and AMONG, which are restrictive.

Consequently, one wonders why the Prosecution would consider the Tutsis as the only victims and exclude the Hutus also mentioned in the document.

Besides, the authors of the document hasten to add that: [**“political opponents who want power or peaceful and democratic change of the current political regime in Rwanda are NOT to be lumped together with the ENI or their supporters”**] (see page 2 of document). Things cannot be clearer than this. The term refers to all opponents, whatever their ethnic origin because multiparty politics was functioning at that time and several Tutsis were engaged in the political fight. The term enemy referred to the RPF and its soldiers.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

I am of the opinion that belonging to an ethnic group or a different regional entity is not a problem in itself. But old and recent history of Rwanda has shown us that such differences can be exploited for political and economic gains to build a nation or destroy it.

If for the Hutu, the feudal colonial past meant bondage, drudgery, whipping (eight strokes of the whip constituted a standard punishment), contempt, exploitation and travesty of justice, any idea of returning to such a system could only bring about anxiety, insecurity and rejection. That is what happened when the RPF-initiated conflict broke out.

Democracy and the return of the refugees that were advanced as reasons for the attack turned out to be false pretext, since the emergence of multiparty politics and the Arusha Accords that gave RPF a rosy share did not quench the RPF's thirst for unshared power; this, in fact, was its sole objective: to wipe out the 1959 revolution and the system it had helped put in place. All means were good enough: war, terrorism, political and ethnic murders, brinksmanship in negotiations they did not believe in, manipulating politicians inside the country, using civilians as shields, so many acts and methods that prevented the RPF from widening its political base.

The explosive situation created by the RPF's schemes and the conflict in particular led to the massacres that followed the assassination of President Habyarimana, massacres in which Hutus and Tutsis alike died. But one may wonder to whom was Habyarimana an obstacle, who benefited from his death and the ensuing chaos. One may also wonder why a serious inquiry into his death and that of his Burundian counterpart Ntaryimira was never opened. One has the impression that the world's powers involved in the Rwandan conflict, including those that lost some of their citizens in the conflict, do not want to find out the truth, because it disturbs them, because they were perhaps directly involved in the conflict and why not in the assassination. The entire Rwandan populace, Hutus and Tutsis alike, were sacrificed for the ambitions of those who believe that they were born to rule with no regard for democratic principles. This was the moving force behind the 1994 events. And there are testimonies to show that the "Interahamwe" phenomenon was in actual fact nothing but a big smokescreen to cover a big lie. Evidence of RPF's crimes abounds: there are reports, like those of P. Reyntjens and Souter, SOS Rwanda-Burundi, Gersonny, R. Garreton, M. Hourigan, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the book written by C. Onana and D. Mushayidi, etc. There are survivors, even in Rwanda, let alone those outside Rwanda, who are willing to testify about what they saw, without the presence of RPF agents. But RPF backers are after some shameful interests in the region. This was seen with the conflagration of Central Africa, the pursuit and massacre of hundreds of thousands of refugees thousands of kilometres away from Rwanda.



## **ACRONYMS**

RPA:	Rwandan Patriotic Army
RPF:	Rwandan Patriotic Front
UNAMIR:	United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda
UNOMUR:	United Nations Observer Mission to Uganda-Rwanda
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
UNO:	United Nations Organization
OAU:	Organization of African Unity

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## ANNEXES:

- (1) Listes de personnes à « neutraliser » par le FPR, janvier 1994.
- (2) Témoignage d' A. T. Nyetera devant la Commission sénatoriale du Parlement belge.
- (3) Discours de Juan Carrero sur les massacres au Rwanda, Madrid 15/2/2001.
- (4) LISTE DES MEMBRES DU FPR-INKOTANYI/APR SOUPÇONNES D' AVOIR PREMEDIATE ET COMMIS DES CRIMES CONTRE L' HUMANITE QUI SONT DE LA COMPETENCE DU TRIBUNAL PENAL INTERNATIONAL POUR LE RWANDA (T.P.I.R.), SOS RWANDA-BURUNDI, DOSSIER No. 1, Buzet, juin 1998.
- (5) « Que je loue Gisa, le jeune homme à la beauté indescriptible », Traduction de « Nsingize Gisa umusore utagira uko asa » de A. Kimenyi, in Rwanda : Point de vue, no. 15, 1996.

## SIGLES

APR : Armée Patriotique Rwandaise

APROSOMA : Association pour la Promotion Sociale de la Masse

CDR : Coalition pour la Défense de la République

CND : Conseil Nationale de Développement

FAR : Forces Armées Rwandaises

FDC : Forces Démocratiques pour le Changement

FPR : Front Patriotique Rwandais

GOMN :Groupe d' Observateurs Militaires Neutres

MDR : Mouvement Démocratique Républicain

MINUAR : Mission des Nations Unies d' Assistance au Rwanda

MINUOR : Mission des Nations Unies d' Observation au Rwanda

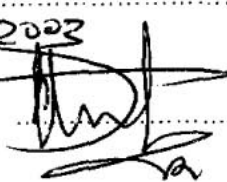
MRND : Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement



International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda  
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Date: <b>31 March, 2003</b>		Case Name / Affaire: <b>The Prosecutor v. JUVENAL KAJELIJELI</b>	
		Case No / Affaire Nr.: <b>ICTR-98-44A-T</b>	
To: A:	<input type="checkbox"/> TC1	received by / reçu par:	ALO: received by / reçu par
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	<input type="checkbox"/> Judge A. Vaz	.....	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
	<input type="checkbox"/> Judge A. Gunawardana	.....	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
	<input type="checkbox"/> E. Nahamya, Co-ordinator	.....	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Judge A. Ramaroson	.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> .....
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trial Attorney in charge of case: <b>IFEOMA OJEMENI</b>		received by 	
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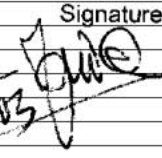
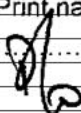
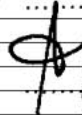
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	Case No / Affaire Nr.: <b>ICTR-98-44A-T</b>		
To: A:	Name of detainee / nom du détenu  <b>KAJELIJELI</b>	<b>TO BE FILLED IN BY THE DETAINEE</b> <b>A COMPLETER PAR LE DETENU</b> I confirm reception of the document(s) listed below. <i>Je confirme réception du/des documents mentionné(s) ci-dessous.</i> Signature:  Date, Time / Heure: <b>4/4/03</b>	
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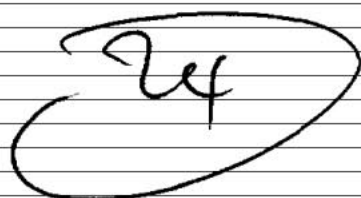
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